DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 376 756 HE 027 893

AUTHOR	Brown, Sally, Ed.; And Others
TITLE	Observing Teaching. SEDA Paper 79.
INSTITUTION	Staff and Educational Development Association, Birmingham (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-946815-48-8
PUB DATE	Oct 93
NOTE	92p.; One title in a series by the Standing Conference on Educational Development.
AVAILABLE FROM	SEDA Administrator, Gala House, 3 Raglan Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7RA England, United Kingdom (7 British pounds).
PUB TYPE	Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Check Lists; *Classroom Observation Techniques; *College Faculty; Compliance (Legal); Foreign Countries; Higher Education; Peer Evaluation; Self Evaluation (Individuals); Student Evaluation of Teacher Performance; Teacher Evaluation
IDENTIFIERS	United Kingdom

ABSTRACT

This publication offers practical support to those in British higher education implementing the Observation of Teaching governmental directives. It provides discussion of key issues as well as a range of materials on how to carry out teaching observation including 23 checklists. The materials are grouped in four main areas: general issues, self assessment, peer assessment, and student observation. The chapters are as follows: (1) "Editorial" (Sally Brown and Gareth Jones); (2) "Observing Teaching" (Stewart Rawnsley); (3) "Ways of Observing: Comment" (Gareth Jones); (4) "Observing Teaching: Issues and Outcomes" (Sally Brown, Clive Colling); (5) "Observing Teaching in Other Contexts" (George Brown); (6) "What To Do Before the Session: Some Guidance on Observation of Teaching in Higher Education" (Gareth Jones); (7) "Self Assessment: Reflecting on Your Own Teaching: Observation Checklists 2-6" (Graham Gibbs); (8) "Watching Yourself Teach and Learning from It" (Tony Claydon and Liz McDowell); (9) "Observing Teaching in Higher Education" (Sally Brown); (10) "Peer Assessment: Checklists 7-20, Giving and Receiving Feedback, Developing an Observation Schedule"; (11) "Observation of Teaching: Guidelines for Observers and Observed, Observation Checklist 21" (Hazel Fullerton); and (12) "Student Observation: Checklists 22 and 23." The thirteenth chapter is an annotated bibliography containing nine references. (JB)

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Staff & Educational Development Association

Observing Teaching

Edited by

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Staff and Educational Development Association

Observing Teaching

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SEDA Paper 79
October 1993
(Reprinted February 1994)
ISBN 0 946815 48 8

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1. Editorial:

Sally Brown, University of Northumbria and
Gareth Jones, University of Teesside

In this guide we aim to provide some practical help to those in Higher Education who are looking at how best to implement Observation of Teaching. Observation of Teaching is a stated government intention in Higher Education, so it merits our consideration. We believe too that it has potentially great benefits for students, lecturers and the Universities in which they work, because it encourages reflection on pedagogical practice.

This guide provides some useful discussion of the key issues as well as a wide range of materials on how to do it. We do not suggest you read the guide cover to cover, but instead select the elements that offer most value to you in your particular context.

Twenty three checklists are included, which can be used for observation of different kinds of teaching activities. These we envisage can be adopted for local use, rather than be adopted uncritically.

We have grouped the material broadly into four main areas: General issues, sections two to six; Self Assessment, sections seven and eight; Peer Assessment, sections nine to eleven and Student Observation, section twelve. The final section is an annotated bibliography to guide further reading.

2. Observing teaching:

Stewart Rawnsley
Leeds Metropolitan University

Attention is now increasingly being focused on the quality of teaching in Higher Education. On one hand there is a political spotlight, for example the 1991 White Paper "Higher Education : A New Framework"[1] has raised the issues of Audit and Assessment. On the other hand Higher Education institutions themselves are paying greater attention to the practical necessity of ensuring teaching of a high quality under the pressures of rising student numbers and pedagogic change.

Much of the recent attention has so far been of a rhetorical nature though there is increasing evidence of a desire to move towards more practical ways of actually ensuring quality. This SCED paper should be seen as a contribution to that practice.

The quality of teaching can only properly be assessed if teaching is considered as part of a process and in the context of the whole teaching and learning environment. At a macro level, the way in which an institution presents an image of itself and the way it may wish to develop, sometimes enshrined in a mission statement, will be two of the factors which determine that environment. Some institutions now give greater consideration to the 'student market' they wish to attract, which may effect the gender balance, class and ethnic background as well as age range of the student body; many have identified the desired learning outcomes of their students, often with an emphasis on 'capability learning', 'independent learning' or 'competence-based learning' which focus on the total student learning experience, with face to face contact between students and tutors being only one of several resources available for student learning.[2]

Thus models of students are emerging which will, in turn, determine the range of skills required of the tutor. The skills of the tutor will depend to some extent on the recruitment policy of the institution, for instance whether teaching qualifications and/or experience are essential requirements for new staff, and more particularly on its staff development policy and resources.

Such attempts to determine the pedagogic framework may not harmonise with the actual resources made available to staff and students, since teaching and learning are affected by the quality of library provision, computing facilities, teaching accommodation, audio-visual aids and access to good reprographic facilities. In a period of rapid change, most notably that of rising class sizes, pressure on such resources is increasing and this in turn affects the way we are able to teach.

The introduction of appraisal schemes means that staff are more accountable for the work they do. At its best appraisal should offer a means of identifying staff needs and aspirations and matching them to available staff development resources. If, in addition, action plans and reviews are updated as part of the process rather than as annual events, then a framework exists within which observation of teaching could take place. However, if appraisal is considered as a means of imposing control and is linked to performance related pay, it is unlikely to offer the support required by staff who need to improve or change their teaching.

This then is the context within which observation of teaching is likely to take place and it raises some serious questions, namely:

What will be observed?
How will it be observed?
Who will observe?
By what criteria will the quality of teaching be judged?
What will happen afterwards?

Each of these questions requires careful consideration; it is possible here to indicate some general principles which should aid the development of good practice.

What will be observed?

If teaching is considered as a process, then the quality of a teacher may be assessed by reference to a variety of inputs into any particular interaction between a teacher and students, including access to resources, quality of workbooks/handouts, teaching accommodation, planning and preparation of the lecture or tutorials, relevance of materials, discussions, etc. to the age, gender and ethnic mix and any physical disabilities within the group of students. Where staff are appointed without teaching qualifications and/or experience, the institution has a responsibility to ensure that adequate training is provided. If it is not available, then it should not be assumed that all staff will provide the same quality of teaching. In other words there is far more to it than simply observing a teacher perform; indeed, that performance may well be affected by factors outside the control of the teacher, in which case they should be clearly identified when observation does take place.

How will it be observed?

There are various methods of observation, ranging from student questionnaires to video recording. The method/s chosen will depend to a large extent on the aims of observation and must be seen to be appropriate to the context. Evidence of some aspects of teaching quality may, of course, be presented by means other than direct observation, for example through the use of teaching portfolios, and serious consideration should be given to the actual method used.

Who will observe?

Observers can be self, students, peer or superior. The choice will be determined by the culture of the institution and may be made at various levels. In practice there may well be a mix of observers using different methods. Students, for example, may complete a questionnaire, while a peer group may discuss the quality of teaching once it has taken place. No matter who does the observing, it is important to consider the context and the reasons why observation is taking place.

The criteria for quality

It should be clear that observation of teaching can only provide a small part of the evidence of teaching quality and it would be foolish to rely solely on the results of a questionnaire or a peer group discussion. In a recent CVCP green paper "Teaching Standards and Excellence in Higher Education"[3] Lewis Elton and Patricia Partington have formulated new "bespoke" criteria for teaching under the following headings:

Teaching within the institution

Preparation for teaching
Quality of delivery of teaching
Volume and range of teaching
Innovation in teaching
General communication with students
Assessment/examination procedures
Evaluation of own teaching
Management of teaching

Other teaching criteria

Invitations to teach elsewhere
Membership of professional groups
Professional service to other universities and organisations
Publications on teaching
Teaching grants and contracts used.

Elton and Partington add that "it is impossible...to consider the evaluation and improvement of quality in teaching without exploring the incentives and the motivation of teachers to analyse and improve their performance".[4] Teaching quality needs to be recognised so that staff know their efforts are appreciated and that they may be able to contribute to staff development for others.

What will happen afterwards?

Not only do the reasons for observing teaching need to be clearly identified before the process takes place, but also the implications need to be addressed. If teaching is observed in order to identify staff development needs, the system will fall into disrepute if the needs are not met. Similarly, if it is used to identify inadequate teaching and learning environments, teachers will react with cynicism if those inadequacies are not redressed. It will be of the utmost importance to separate development of teaching quality from disciplinary procedures, since the teaching and learning environment is never completely controlled by the teacher; everyone is implicated and to discipline staff for shortcomings in one aspect of the teaching process would be counterproductive.

Who owns the process?

Many of these issues will not be resolved without the active involvement of the individual teacher. Ownership of observation needs to be devolved down as much as possible to the participants in the teaching process. Both observer and the observed teacher are party to the process and ground rules must be determined before observation takes place. The closer the ownership of the process is located to the actual participants (which may mean a course team or individual teachers), the more likely it is that the aims of the observation will be achieved and the outcomes accepted by all concerned.

References:

1. White Paper (1991), "Higher Education : A New Framework" London : HMSO

2. For a recent review of innovation in teaching and learning see Noel Entwistle, "The Impact of Teaching on Learning Outcomes in Higher Education, A Literature Review." CVCP 1992.

3. Elton L & Partington P (1991) "Teaching Standards & Excellence in Higher Education: Developing a Culture for Quality". CVCP.

4. Elton & Partington. op.cit.

3. Ways of observing: comment

Gareth Jones
Teesside University

Before engaging on any form of lecturer observation it is essential that certain safeguards are observed. But before I deal with these it may be appropriate to comment on lecturer observation as I experienced it in Teacher Education. Students were allocated tutors who had experience in the main in either infant, primary or secondary levels. With the secondary level the tutor usually observed a student within the same discipline.

The tutor met with the student on many occasions to agree on teaching schemes in conjunction with the school where the student was to engage in practice. The tutor sometimes visited the school to make acquaintance with either the Head Teacher or the teacher who would be in charge of the student whilst in practice. All very laudable so far. However, students were never sure when the tutor would visit them - tutors would simply turn up to observe without notice - in fact, in some cases, tutors did not want students to know when they would be visiting them. It was essentially a one-way process and the tutor took no responsibility if anything went badly wrong with the session, despite the fact that they had agreed with the student the content and processes of the teaching sessions. There was usually very little time at the end of each session, particularly in the infant and primary school to debrief the student. Feedback was often in the form of a written response with little opportunity for discussion of the activities and issues. The process, although supportive, was very judgemental in character: after all their qualification depended largely on their operation in the classroom. We were the assessors and they were the students.

An example of a set of guidelines and notes issued to one group of students in Sunderland University is given at the end of this section and illustrates the change in practice.

In higher education the situation is different because all who operate in the system are employed by the institution and are our colleagues, new colleagues in some cases who are mature (let us not forget that some students are as well!), and knowledgeable in their various disciplines. The "new recruits' very often are on fixed term contracts, being asked to undertake a period of "training" and are therefore in what are very insecure, vulnerable situations. How observed teaching is undertaken is crucial to them and to the institution. Observation and feedback must be non-judgemental and confidential with an agreed contract between the observer and the member of staff concerned, if the process is to work for the benefit of both staff and institution.

Ways of observing: comment

Assumptions about teaching

There are three main assumptions to make with regard to good teaching:

- there are many forms of good teaching
- most lecturers believe that what they are teaching is important and that students need to know about these things and that lecturers are trying to communicate these effectively
- any lecturer finds criticism hard to take, but finds praise has in some cases a dramatic effect on their performance. (Helling, 1988). [1]

What we need to do is to build upon the strengths of the lecturer in order to encourage them to develop their performance.

" Information about what we do wrong.....is invested in a special kind of credibility yet is not very effective in changing behaviour." and "....useful information is specific, rewarding and provides direction."(Helling, 1988). (op cit).

A number of the checklists included in this paper do have negative aspects of observation in them - it may well be necessary to use these as lists rather than as rating scales.

Groundrules for observing

If there is to be mutual trust between the lecturer and the observer about the how and the what of observing, then we need to establish strict groundrules. This is particularly important when the observer is a line manager. Below are some general and more specific groundrules to start off with. We suggest that having read these you agree between yourselves what your groundrules will be..... and stick to them!

General groundrules

Even if engagement in the process is mandatory, it is essential that groundrules are agreed between the parties.

Here are two general ones:

- The processes must be known and the outcomes be confidential between the observed and the observer. After all, what we are aiming to achieve is the improvement of practice with the consequent improvements in teaching and student learning.
- It must be non-judgemental but supportive.

Specific groundrules

1	agree when to observe	-	month; day; session (some might be fixed if staff are obliged to engage in a staff development programme)
2	agree what to observe	-	course; type of teaching/learning session; type of student - full-time/part-time/mature/non-mature
3	agree how the observation will be undertaken	-	by observer using agreed observation checklists/use of video/feedback from the students taking the module etc.

4 there must be a **briefing** session prior to the whole activity as well as individual sessions with each responsible for the process and the outcomes of individual sessions.

5 **confidentiality of the process**. No information to be divulged to anyone by the observer. Any information about the performance of an individual should be the property of that individual. The individual is at liberty to use information for personal benefit, particularly in relation to staff appraisal.

Reference:

(1) B Helling "Looking for Good Teaching: A guide to Peer Observation" Journal of Staff, Programmed Organisational Development Vol 6 No4 1988.

Extracts from tutor guidance on Observations of Teaching at University of Sunderland from Gill Reay

Introduction

The PGCE Business Education course is designed to lay the foundation for students to begin to develop skills and expertise necessary to teach within the field of Business Education in secondary schools and where appropriate, within the tertiary phase of education.

During the last six weeks of the Autumn term, the first block teaching practice will be undertaken. The first week of the block practice will allow for observation, followed by a week of preparation at home/university and then four weeks of actual classroom practice, where students teach 50%. The first practice is graded pass/fail.

During the last eight weeks of the Spring term, the second and final teaching practice will be undertaken. Again, the first and second weeks allow for observation and preparation, followed by six weeks of classroom practice. Students should undertake a 65% normal teaching timetable for this teaching practice. This final practice is graded.

Students' experience in schools is an integral part of the course and is directly related to and maximally integrated with the college-based programme. Each placement requires the student to take a progressively more complex role in the school under the supervision of the tutor and the teachers who work in close cooperation throughout serial and block practices.

Students should commence the first block teaching practice confident that they have the subject and pedagogical knowledge and skills to perform successfully in the workshop and classroom situation and thus be in a position to provide pupils with meaningful learning experiences. In order to be able to approach teaching practice at this level, students are provided with a range of college-based courses and a series of related school experiences prior to their first block teaching practice.

Students are prepared for their professional role through eight carefully structured series of practices and periods of school involvement moving from observation, through serial practice, to block practice.

Supervision of practices

Supervision is seen as a partnership between schools/colleges and the University; the staff of all institutions work together to benefit the students.

Block placements are supervised by school/college staff and regular visits by a University Supervisor are to be expected. Each student is allocated a Personal Supervisor by the University; the purpose of such visits is to help the student to gain as much as possible from the practice.

In order to foster links between schools/colleges and the University, the supervisor works with the same establishments each year.

Visits by University Supervisor

(a) You should discuss with your supervisor before the practice what he/she wishes you to do when he/she comes into the room, e.g. he/she may wish to be introduced to the class on his/her first visit and thereafter to come in unrecognised.

(b) Your file should be readily available at all times open at the page of the lesson in progress.

(c) Usually tutors will leave in your file a lesson Advice Sheet. This should be kept adjacent to the lesson to which it refers.

(d) If it is convenient and time is available, the tutor may wish to discuss the lesson with you before he/she leaves the school.

(e) On some occasions your supervisor will use the schedule to provide you with formative feedback on your teaching.

(f) The schedule may also be used by other tutors who visit during the practice.

(g) The assessment for your practice will take into consideration the judgements of your supervisor, the school staff and, where applicable, the external examiner.

Sunderland University
School of Education
Formative Feedback (Secondary)
Checklist 1

Name of Student .....

Preparation

		Excellent / Weak
1.	Clearly stated aims/objectives/intentions - adequacy of detail.	--------
2.	Relationship to school/National Curriculum guidelines.	--------
3.	Appropriateness/balance/clarity of teaching methods and pupil experiences for fulfilling the above.	--------
4.	Match of learning experiences to pupils' needs (social, emotional, physical, intellectual).	--------
5.	Awareness of pupil's knowledge of the topic/ work already covered.	--------
6.	Adequate knowledge of the topic.	--------
7.	Consideration of cross-curricular elements (dimensions, themes, skills)	--------
8.	Provision for the effective use of suitable resources.	--------

Management and Teaching

9.	Introducing/negotiating/clarifying with pupils the purpose of the activities/lesson.	--------
10.	Motivating pupils to participate in the activities.	--------
11.	Quality of relationships with individuals, groups and whole class.	--------

		Excellent	Weak
12.	Evidence of matching learning experiences to pupil's needs (social, emotional, intellectual, physical).	--------	
13.	Match between plans and events.	--------	
14.	Flexibility and adaptability to meet changing needs.	--------	
15.	Encouraging and building on a wide range of pupil responses (oral, written, pictorial ....).	--------	
16.	Recognition of the value of pupils initiating and maintaining responsibility for their own learning.	--------	
17.	Clarity of speech.	--------	
18.	Effectiveness of interaction (teacher and pupil both explaining, questioning, commenting, listening, discussing, providing feedback ....).	--------	
19.	Consideration of safety.	--------	
20.	Effective use of classroom space and furniture.	--------	
21.	Providing an appropriate range of learning experiences.	--------	
22.	Effective use of appropriate resources.	--------	
23.	Effective use of display (including children's work).	--------	
24.	Appropriateness of organisation of children (whole class, groups, individuals).	--------	
25.	Management of movement of children.	--------	
26.	Maintenance of order.	--------	
27.	Encouragement of children's self discipline, responsibility and respect for others.	--------	
28.	Evidence of children's learning (progression, enhanced quality....)	--------	
29.	Effective drawing together of learning activities.	--------	

Assessment and Evaluation

		Excellent	Weak
30.	Ability to perceive and interpret what children are doing and learning.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	
31.	Use of assessment with a clear purpose.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	
32.	Use of a variety of modes of assessment as appropriate.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	
33.	Use of relevant, manageable and accessible records at individual and whole class levels.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	
34.	Reviewing and interpreting teaching and learning and incorporating findings in subsequent planning.	_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _	

Comments

4. Observing teaching: issues and outcomes:

Sally Brown, Clive Colling and members of the Educational Development Service, the University of Northumbria at Newcastle

Issues

Observation of teaching raises a number of issues that must be addressed before any system for doing so is designed and put into practice. Fundamentally, the designers must ask themselves whether the observation of teaching is primarily developmental, concerned with enabling the lecturer to become a better practitioner or whether it is concerned with control of the academic by the line manager, including some element of accountability for poor performance.

If the former, then there are numerous, demonstrable benefits for all parties and it will be able to be implemented consensually rather then by imposition. If it is designed so that managers can use the process to assert authority over lecturers, a much more confrontational situation is envisaged. Of course, accountability does not necessarily imply a Draconian approach by management; indeed it can be extremely valuable where it is appropriately handled.

These are sometimes described as **hard** and **soft** approaches; a **hard** approach being characterised by the use of, for example, systematic, objective, interactive schedules. Soft approaches tend to be more descriptive activities and may include triangulation of perceptions of lecturer, students and observer. The terms **hard** and **soft** should not be viewed as implying value judgments, that is that the former is better or worse than the latter. Different contexts will make one or other approach more appropriate or viable.

Questions

What are the functions of observation? What will be done with the information gained and who will use it?

Is the process of observation to carry rewards and/or penalties or is it simply to provide feedback and inform a pedagogic dialogue or both?

What support can be offered to the lecturer? How can the process be made to be of maximum benefit to the individual as well as the institution?

Is there to be any element of choice about who observes? Some would prefer to be observed by near colleagues rather then distant line managers. Equally, some may prefer the impartiality of someone they do not know well. Some would argue that women should be offered the choice of being observed by a fellow woman. Should those for whom observation is total anathema have the ultimate choice to opt out of being observed? In any case, there is a need for credibility, trust and respect to be an integral part of the process.

Should observers be trained? If so, how should this be done? It is not enough simply to devise a universal checklist and send line managers out to do it. They will need to develop the skills to discuss the criteria used for observation and evaluation with the lecturers being observed. The success of the system will depend heavily on the observers' sensitivity in implementing the agreed scheme.

How can observation be applied to all teaching contexts? It is relatively easy to see how observation can take place in a lecture theatre or a seminar room. But much teaching takes place in one-to-one situations where observation can be more intrusive and the context more sensitive. No system of pro formas can hope to be appropriate for every teaching context, so processes will have to be customised for each individual observation to some extent. Nevertheless, are there some basic criteria which can be applied to all teaching contexts?

Should the lecturer have some say about when he/she is to be observed or should the occasions be at the line manager's discretion entirely? We assert the observer should not be viewed as an inspector swooping into the classroom without warning to catch the lecturer off guard. The levels of stress that many lecturers feel when being watched teaching should not be underestimated.

It should not be assumed that observations conducted without warning are more likely to provide opportunities to view the "real" abilities of the lecturer. It is more likely that the element of shock or surprise will throw the lecturer off balance and performance will be unrepresentatively poor. Some advance knowledge may enable some lecturers to put on a special show for the occasion but if the process is a non-threatening one, lecturers are more likely to be relaxed and to behave (relatively) normally.

What techniques should be incorporated in observation? Will the process incorporate audio - or video-recording? Will checklists or recording sheets be used? How far will the observer's subjective responses be incorporated? Will the process incorporate self-evaluation by the lecturer? Will feedback be included?

Values

We assert that there is tremendous potential for observation to be used as a methodology to promote self-knowledge and personal development for the lecturer. They will be able to get new perspectives on their work and possibly become more confident and self-aware. The importance that the institution is seen to be placing on teaching may well help lecturers feel more highly valued.

Students will be likely to benefit, because they will see that the University values and takes note of teaching quality in the classroom. This will be enhanced particularly if the observation process includes an element of student feedback, so that students feel their views are noted.

The institution should gain a better understanding of what *actually* happens in the classroom, enabling easier identification of developmental and training needs. The effective teacher will be able to be commended and the less able will be supported to improve. Managers will be more confident about the value of teaching processes and will be able to demonstrate this to external agencies.

Conflict can largely be defused if the process is designed to be supportive rather than authoritarian or sanctioning. If it is imposed in a strictly hierarchical way, we assert that it will become a bone of contention between academics and their line managers and this will lead to lost opportunities. We therefore propose the following guidelines:

Guidelines for practice

- Observation of teaching should never be unannounced. Timing, duration, criteria and process should be agreed in advance.

- As far as possible, the choice of who does the observing should be a matter of negotiation between relevant parties. For preference, we would advocate the incorporation of peer observation.

- As with appraisal, it should be delegated to the lowest level, rather than weighted towards the top of the hierarchy.

- Observers will need to be trained to maximise the learning potential of the process. Discussion before and after the observation will provide opportunities for discussion, feedback and identification of training needs. It is vital that there should be a debriefing process for participants, and some negotiation about the processes being observed. Ideally, both the person observing and the person being observed should receive training, as in appraisal.

- Clear, overt and agreed criteria about what constitutes good teaching will need to be debated and agreed.

- Observation should be viewed as an on-going process rather than a one-off event.

- Observation systems will need to accommodate the numerous practices that make up the modern academic's teaching work and not just concentrate on conventional lecturing.

- Observation of teaching should not imply a deficit model. It is not concerned with finding faults and remedying them (although this might form a part of the process). The Educational Development Service at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle uses Teaching Process Recall, a methodology using videotapes through which lecturers can look closely at their own teaching and learn from it. *(See the article by Liz McDowell and Tony Claydon on p31).*

- While observation of teaching may well inform the appraisal process, where it can be tremendously valuable in contributing to the dialogue on teaching and learning, it should be specifically delinked from Performance Related Pay.

Conclusions

Systems for the observation of teaching can be devised in such a way that they are acceptable to all participants and that they can add meaningfully to the dialogue on teaching performance. Heavy-handed and over-instrumental systems will be counter-productive, however. Instead, we look forward to a developmental model being implemented that satisfies the needs of each constituent groups and which promotes genuine improvement in the quality of teaching in the University of Northumbria at Newcastle.

5. Observing teaching in other contexts:

George Brown
USDU/CVCP

This section has been edited from a paper prepared for a HEFC seminar entitled "Observing Teaching in Lectures and Seminars", January 1991. It is reproduced with the author's permission.

Introduction

Teaching a course is not only performance in the lecture theatre, laboratory, seminar room, or study, it is also concerned with course design, course organisation, assessment and feedback to students. Hence it follows that in evaluating teaching and courses one should examine data from a variety of courses.

Evaluation of an individual's lectures may be useful for him or her whereas evaluation of a course is more useful for the purpose of improving student learning.

The possible sources of data are:
Course Documents, Course Co-ordinators and Tutors
Current and former students
Professional assessors: Peer Evaluators
Employers

Methods of data collection
Broadly speaking there are two:

Intuitive, casual review
These may provide deep insights but also they may be clouded with prejudice.
They should really be the starting point for:

Systematic reviews
These may involve any or all of the following:-

5.1 Systematic reviewing

Open observations
Again these may provide deep insights but they may also be clouded with prejudice. Put another way, open observations may be informative but unreliable. A few guidelines on what to look for can reduce inconsistency.

Questionnaires
There are several types of questionnaire. They rely upon the accuracy of recall of the respondents - and their honesty.

Document analysis
This includes the analysis of the course design, the methods of teaching, course content and resources. The method assumes that the design is adhered to. Assignments and examination scripts may also be analysed to identify common errors, weaknesses and strengths.

Checklists
These identify key components. The observer records their presence or absence. They are usually reliable, easy to use and they provide guidelines and feedback to the lecturer. The values are explicit.

Rating schedules
There are several types. Nowadays brief 4 or 6 point scales are preferred. Training is needed to ensure that different observers are using the scales consistently. Without this training the ratings are usually unreliable. When used by groups of students, training is less necessary but the rating scales and items must be clear and meaningful. Rating schedules provide a profile of performance but they may not indicate what a person has to do to improve. For example, a low score on 'interest' may not help someone to provide more interesting lectures.

Transcripts analysis
This may be done using category methods or open 'literary' methods as if the transcript were a piece of text. Transcript analysis is particularly useful for exploring the structure of a lecture, a small group teaching session, or a discussion of a course. It is time consuming; a one hour lecture may take twenty hours to transcribe and analyse in detail; none-the-less analysis of brief extracts can be very fruitful

5.2 Sources of evaluation

The sources of evaluation of a course are one's colleagues, one's students, former students, employers, professional assessors or oneself.

Peer evaluations

Pairs of lecturers or groups of lecturers agree on a set of criteria and then observe each others' lectures or classes. Alternatively, they may analyse each others' sources. The method is valuable but it is important that observers are constructive and recognise that there are different ways of structuring materials and teaching.

Student evaluations

Based on the principle that if you want to know if the restaurant is good, ask the customers not the cook or proprietor. Such evaluations may be open ended questions, checklists, rating schedules etc. Expect to find wide variations in responses. You cannot please all of the students all of the time. If you are using rating schedules, look at the standard deviations as well as the means. Questions which focus on structure and presentation are more useful than questions on likes and dislikes.

Student learning

You can use examination results but there are many factors in addition to your teaching which influence such results. So if you wish to measure student learning from a course unit, then devise your own tests and assignments. You could include some questions or items which require the students to recall information, identify principles and apply the information and principles to solve a problem. Perhaps one should be actively searching for ways of estimating qualitative changes in student understanding.

Former students views

These are particularly useful for evaluating a vocational course. These views may be collected through interviews and questionnaires.

Professional assessors

Professional assessors may have wide experience of observing teaching, of interviewing staff and of documentary analysis. They tend to use semi-structured guides. Sometimes their main concern is to make a comparative judgement although some are willing to provide specific feedback on a course. Like all assessors, they have values and preferences for some approaches. Ascertain and establish the set of purposes of the assessments by consultants and other professionals so that you can provide the appropriate evidence.

Self-evaluation based on recall and reflection

This form of evaluation is relatively non-threatening. It may be based upon checklists or open ended questions. It may be done in solitude or in small groups. It is based on the assumption that recall and self-evaluation are accurate.

Self-evaluation based on evidence collected

This form of evaluation requires the person to collect evidence from a variety of sources - peers, students, student learning etc. and on the basis of the evidence form a judgement of what aspects of his/her teaching, if any, should be modified and what courses, workshops or other opportunities would be of assistance. The same process may be used by a department.

5.3 General guidance on evaluating teaching

Key Questions
It is emphasised that before embarking upon any form of evaluation it is important to ask oneself:

Why am I evaluating this course or teaching?
What is the purpose(s) of the evaluation?
Who is the evaluation for?

Examples can be found throughout this SCED paper that are for evaluating courses, class teaching, lectures, small group teaching. Most of the examples are based on ratings although the items are more important than the scale. Some are for use by students, some by oneself and some by other observers. All may be adapted for particular purposes although it is advisable to consider whether a particular item is sufficiently important to include in a schedule. If you devise your own schedule then make it brief and easy to use. Pilot any new schedule to ensure that it is estimating what you want it to estimate and that it can be used consistently by a group of observers.

If you develop a reliable and valid scale then it could be used to compare: Different subjects; Different departments; Different modules; Small and Large classes; Introductory and Final Year classes; Compulsory courses and electives.

Eventually one could build up a set of norms for various classes, but if you do follow this pathway then it is important that the observers receive training and that frequent measures of intra- and inter-observer reliability are taken.

5.4 Three dimensions of teaching

A useful quick appraisal of teaching may be based upon the three dimensions of teaching that have been consistently extracted from factor analyses of teaching over the past thirty years.

Systematic, business-like	6	5	4	3	2	1	Disorganised, slipshod
Warm, friendly, supportive	6	5	4	3	2	1	Cold, aloof, hostile
Stimulating, enthusiastic	6	5	4	3	2	1	Dull, boring

5.5 Five characteristics of courses

Studies in the UK and Australia by Ramsden and Entwistle (see annotated bibliography at the end of the SCED paper) have linked approaches to study with students' perceptions of courses. Five major factors have been identified that contribute to the depth and quality of student learning:-

Good Teaching
Clear Goals
Appropriate workload
Appropriate assessment
Emphasis on independence

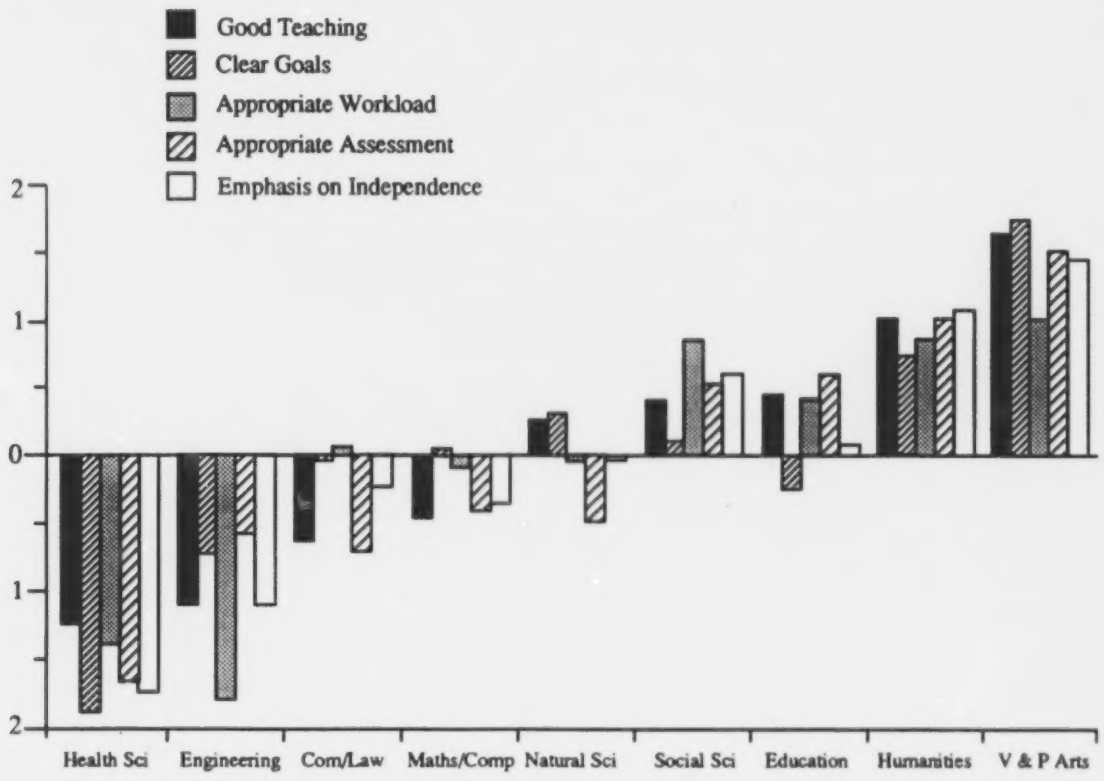
The diagram below provides some of the results of the Australian survey that is based upon a sample of 3,300 students in 13 Universities and Colleges of Higher Education.

There were no major differences between types of institution but there were differences between subjects and within subjects. The inventory/raw scores for each subject are available from Paul Ramsden, CSHE, University of Melbourne.

It is interesting to notice how student satisfaction with teaching seems to be greater in those subject areas which are perceived as having a higher degree of independence. This diagram may well also inform section 12 on student observation.

5.6 Differences in teaching quality by field of study

This graph, based on Australian research on a large sample of students, shows how relatively satisfied students from different subject areas are with their experiences of teaching and learning.



Source Paul Ramsden "A Performance indicator of Teaching Quality in Higher Education : the course experience questionnaire" Studies in Higher Education 16.2 p129 - 150.

5.7 Suggestions and comments

1. Ascertain the intentions of the lecturer and, if appropriate, the students
2. Match their actions to their intentions.
3. Is it wrong or merely different to what you would do?
4. Formulate and test your inferences.
5. Only using direct observation is as bad as not using direct observation.
6. Put another way, direct observation cannot give you the whole picture.
7. What may count as "good teaching" in one context or subject, may not be "good teaching" in another context or subject. What counts as "good teaching" for you?
8. Some characteristics of teaching are common to all subjects, some are common to some subjects and some may be unique to a subject.
9. Read the research on teaching in Higher Education so you can make informed professional judgements.
10. Groups assessing the same subject, time viewing, video-recordings, discussing and sharing views on what counts as "good teaching"
11. Be sensible and sensitive with colleagues' concerns when viewing and discussing their teaching with them.
12. In reports, provide the evidence on which your conclusions are based. Don't over generalise. Do focus on ways in which the teaching may be improved.

5.8 Assessing one's course

Teaching a course is not only performance in the lecture theatre, laboratory or seminar room, it is also concerned with course design, organisation, assessment and providing feedback to students. Here are a few direct questions on each aspect of teaching. Put a cross by any question which is not relevant. Add any questions which you think are pertinent to your courses or modules. After completing the checklist write a brief comment on your course that includes recommendations for action.

Course Design

Could you state the goals and main theme of your course?
Do the lectures, tutorials etc. match the goals of the course?
Do the assignments and exams match the goals?
Is there sufficient variety of teaching approaches in the course?

Observing teaching in other contexts

Course Management

Are the goals of the course communicated clearly to the student?
Are key texts and articles available for students in the library?
Do you supply course outlines?
Do you supply annotated reading lists?

Teaching Performance

Are your lectures clear?
Are they interesting?
Do your students show evidence of thinking on tutorials/seminars?
Do your lab classes develop experimental skills?

Feedback

Do you provide feedback on approach and content?
Do you return marked assignments promptly?
Do you return marked assignments in time for use in revision?
Do you suggest specific ways in which a student could improve?

6. What to do before the session: some guidance on observation of teaching in higher education:

Gareth Jones
University of Teesside

Briefing

- Both parties must meet in order for the observer to explain the rationale behind observing teaching and to agree the groundrules.

  Systems will inevitably vary between institutions - some will adopt the "top down" approach using a line-manager; others may use peers, mentors, professional development tutors and even students in the process. Whatever system is adopted, the question of groundrules, confidentiality and reporting must be observed.

  Appraisal of teaching will not work if it is done to lecturers (Paul Ramsden) (1). Observed teaching, for it to work, must be part of a lecturer's professional development.

- Both must then agree on what is to be observed, when, and what methods will be used for observing.

- The topic/issue of the course will be decided by the lecturer, but the process to be employed during the session must be agreed by both parties.

If the session does not go according to plan, both lecturer and observer must take responsibility for this and learn from the process. If the observer has little knowledge of the subject of the session then he/she must have knowledge of pedagogy. It is essential that the observer is an experienced lecturer, with recent experience of teaching; there is little point in a line-manager engaging in the process if he/she has not taught for several years.

Before the session both have agreed on:

- the content

- the teaching strategies to be used

- the student activities during and after the session
- how the session could be evaluated
- what specific activities will be observed and appraised and what instruments will be used.

The observer might be looking at lecture style; classroom management; leadership skills; questioning techniques and quality of feedback; groupwork skills, or any combination of these.

It is also essential as part of the process of finding out about a person's performance, ideally to observe at different points in time or "windows" to see what is happening. This should give a more objective, honest insight into his/her teaching and perhaps effect improvement.
At the beginning of the session the lecturer should:

- introduce the observer, if it is the first time, and explain exactly to the students why the observer is there.

It is important to mention here that the observer is not there just to observe the lecturer but also them, the students, because both are party to the success of the session - they are part of the process and not just there to receive. They could be given an opportunity at the end of the session to record their feelings with prior agreement of the lecturer.

The observed session
Many things happen during a session be it a lecture, seminar, tutorial or workshop - don't go in with just a note pad and pencil.

The task of the observer is infinitely more difficult than that of the lecturer!

It essential therefore that you use one, or a combination of observation instruments illustrated in this paper. It depends on what you have agreed to observe with the lecturer concerned. In effect you are actually working to an agreed contract with the lecturer.

Also don't forget that many of the sessions you observe will be interesting for many points - it may be a subject new to you or something you always wanted to do or know about - and it is easy to forget to observe!

There is also the question of "observer effect" - you may be drawn in to the session by the lecturer for your comments and this may affect the outcomes of the session. Students also know that you are there not only to observe the lecturer but also them as part of the process. They are often on their best behaviour (or not as the case might be) and tend to ask questions and do all the things that they don't normally do as students. You, therefore, are liable to see a session that is not normal and there is sometimes very little you can do about this.

Using checklists

There are many checklists on offer here and in the educational press. Which ones you use depends not only on your preferences but also the specific issues you are addressing and your role, for example a line manager, lecturer, student and so on.

Below we have tried to give examples to cover all aspects of observation (we hope!); some of these we have adapted from other sources and some re-formatted.

In general, several factors are being observed at the same session so it is essential that a number of these observation instruments are used.

Observing a session is not an easy task and the observer often works harder than the lecturer!

Reference:

1. Paul Ramsden Learning to Teach in Higher Education Routledge 1992

7. Self assessment: reflecting on your own teaching:

This section includes the approach described by Graham Gibbs, and two checklists that can be used for self-assessment

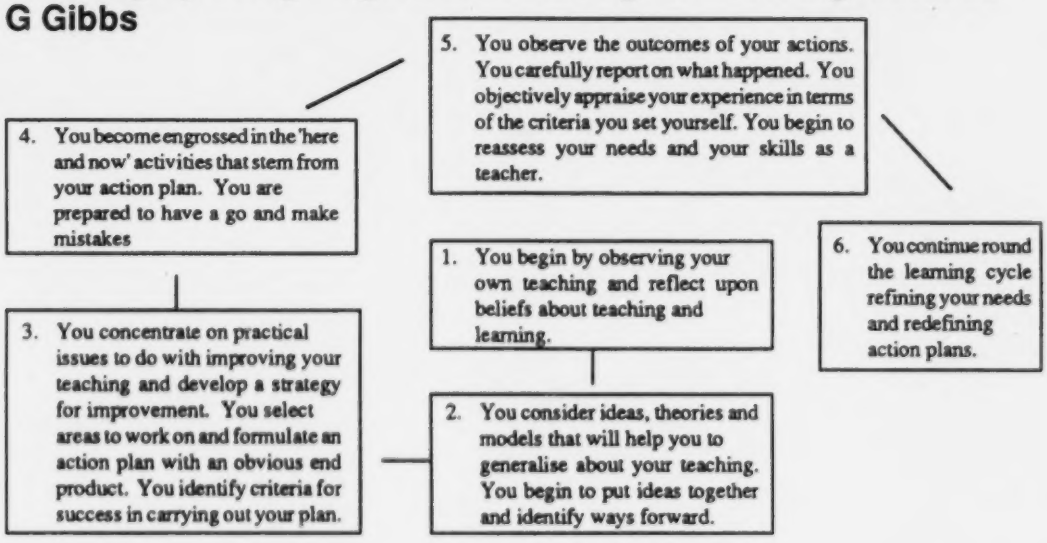
Reflecting on your own performance
As well as having someone to observe your teaching it is vital that you reflect personally on your own performance. G Gibbs (Learning by Doing - A Guide to Teaching and Learning Methods pp. 102 - 110) refers to the use of the experiential cycle, learning logs and questionnaires. Longman FEU *(out of print)*.

He suggests that the use of the experiential cycle can :

- help lecturers identify their own learning need, to reflect upon practice and increase awareness of their experience
- help them to share experience with supportive colleagues and make sense of them
- provide support for risk-taking and experimentation
- offer new concepts with which to analyse their teaching and new methods to try out in their teaching.

The diagram below illustrates this :

Learning by doing - a guide to teaching and learning methods
G Gibbs


5. You observe the outcomes of your actions. You carefully report on what happened. You objectively appraise your experience in terms of the criteria you set yourself. You begin to reassess your needs and your skills as a teacher.
4. You become engrossed in the 'here and now' activities that stem from your action plan. You are prepared to have a go and make mistakes
6. You continue round the learning cycle refining your needs and redefining action plans.
1. You begin by observing your own teaching and reflect upon beliefs about teaching and learning.
3. You concentrate on practical issues to do with improving your teaching and develop a strategy for improvement. You select areas to work on and formulate an action plan with an obvious end product. You identify criteria for success in carrying out your plan.
2. You consider ideas, theories and models that will help you to generalise about your teaching. You begin to put ideas together and identify ways forward.

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Learning Logs

These allow teachers to reflect upon their own performance and others as part of a peer approach to observation. An example of such a log appears below. This process can be simple to begin with but more specific and subtle as time goes on.

Learning by doing - a guide to teaching and learning methods

Checklist 2 - G Gibbs

Reflections on your own teaching

After teaching a lesson, write a short account of what took pace. Do this as soon as possible after the end of the lesson. At this stage don't attempt to evaluate the lesson or your teaching performance; concentrate instead upon what actually happened.

Now try to categorise your observations. Use the following heading:

Things I did before and during the lesson which should have helped students to learn:

Any unplanned things I did during the lesson which should have helped my students to learn:

Finally, write a brief statement of this work describing:

What insights, if any, I gained into the ways in which I helped my students to learn.

Observation Checklists

Checklists can be used to reflect on your own teaching. Overleaf are two examples.

Lecturer self-evaluation checklist

Checklist 3

	Well Done	Attempted To	Not Done
Did I plan the lecture well?	☐	☐	☐
How well did I explain the connections between the topic of this lecture and previous ones?	☐	☐	☐
Were connections with other relevant courses clearly spelled out?	☐	☐	☐
Did I introduce the session well?	☐	☐	☐
Was the content ordered coherently?	☐	☐	☐
What were the three most important things I wanted students to take away with them from this lecture?	☐	☐	☐
What evidence is there that they did learn these things?	☐	☐	☐
Did I describe the facts and explain the concepts clearly enough?	☐	☐	☐
Was there too much or too little for the time available?	☐	☐	☐
Did I miss out or gloss over any difficult points?	☐	☐	☐
How effectively did I involve students in the class?	☐	☐	☐
Did it seem as if students were attentive? Stimulated?	☐	☐	☐
Did I convey enthusiasm for the subject?	☐	☐	☐
Was there enough variety in my presentation?	☐	☐	☐

Teaching and Improving Courses Paul Ramsden Asner Dodls (op cit)

Checklist 4

Record with a tick in the appropriate column the comments which come closest to your opinion of your performance in each of the following areas:

NB: some of the statements below may not be applicable to you for your particular session.

How well did I.....?

		very well	well	not very well	poor
1	link this session to other sessions				
2	introduce this session				
3	make the aims clear to the students				
4	move clearly from stage to stage				
5	emphasise key points				
6	summarise the session				
7	maintain an appropriate pace				
8	capture student interest				
9	maintain student interest				
10	handle problems of inattention				
11	ask questions				
12	handle student questions and responses				
13	plan and direct student tasks				
14	monitor student activity				
15	cope with the range of ability				
16	cope with age range				
17	use AV aids to augment my session				
18	make contact with all class members				
19	cope with individual difficulties				
20	keep the material relevant				
21	use my voice				
22	make use of appropriate body movements				
23	check on student learning				
24	motivate students				
25	convey my enthusiasm				
26	provide a model of good practice				

(Adapted from Gibbs G, Habeshaw & Habeshaw, "53 Ways to Appraise Your Teaching". TES 1988).

Askit

Checklist 5

This system of analysis is designed to help you to classify the questions asked in seminars and tutorials.

Please note down a sample of the questions asked. Immediately after the seminar or tutorial classify each question on each dimension and examine the pattern of questions asked.

Questions	Dimensions								
	Recall	Observ	Thoug	Broad	Narr	Confused	Clear	Encour	Threatn

Explanations in Tutorials

Checklist 6

Orientation

1.	Does your opening gain the group's attention?	Yes/No
2.	Does it establish rapport with the group?	Yes/No
3.	Does it indicate what you intend to explain?	Yes/No

The Key Points

1.	Are your key points clearly expressed?	Yes/No
2.	Are your examples apt and interesting?	Yes/No
3.	Are your qualifications of the key points clearly stated?	Yes/No
4.	Is each key point summarised?	Yes/No
5.	Are the beginnings and ends of the key points clearly indicated?	Yes/No

Feedback

1.	Do you check that the key points are understood?	Yes/No
2.	Do you ask questions in an encouraging way?	Yes/No
3.	Do your students or trainees ask questions?	Yes/No

The Summary

1.	Does your summary bring together the main points?	Yes/No
2.	Are your conclusions clearly stated?	Yes/No
3.	Do you come to an effective stop?	Yes/No

Any "no" answer indicates that your explanations are not as explanatory as they might be. (But everybody gives quite a lot of "no" answers if they are honest.)

8. Watching yourself teach and learning from it:

Tony Claydon and Liz McDowell
University of Northumbria at Newcastle

1. Introduction

Teaching Process Recall (TPR) is derived from Interpersonal Process Recall, which was developed by Norman Kagan at Michigan State University in the early 1960s (Kagan, 1984). It was first used to improve the communication skills of mental health workers but was later used with teachers and several other professional groups.

The in-house lecturer training programme at the University of Northumbria at Newcastle has, amongst its aims, a concern to enable its participants to observe themselves in action as teachers, to reflect upon their behaviour and to generate increasingly effective practices. TPR is the main technique which enables participants to fulfil these aims. Participants in TPR watch themselves teaching on video, recall aspects of the teaching experience, describe what happened there and then and, in consequent rounds of the process, describe and evaluate what they see happening as they watch the videotape in the here and now.

2. Description of the TPR process

The process works as follows:

1. Individuals record themselves on video, teaching a group of actual students.

2. The tapes are shown within a small TPR group of about four participants and a tutor. Each participant in turn takes on the role of Recaller, briefly providing a context for the video extract (describing, for example, the subject being taught or learned, the point in the course, the student group, etc) and then playing the tape, stopping it where he or she wishes to comment. Each individual's session lasts for about 30 minutes.

3. Other members of the group take on specific roles. One becomes the Inquirer, who helps the Recaller describe what was happening in the teaching situation by asking exploratory and information-seeking questions when she or he stops the tape. Such questions might include: What were you thinking then? What were you feeling then? What did you hope to achieve? Did the setting affect you in any way?

Another member becomes a Scribe, making fairly detailed and accurate notes of what the Recaller says. These notes obviate the need for Recallers to make their own notes. Another member becomes an Observer, who notices how and to what extent the Recaller and Inquirer undertake their roles according to guidelines that are provided. The remaining member is the Timekeeper. The tutor generally oversees the session, calling for time-out if problems with the process are encountered. The tutor may also take over the Inquirer's role (with the incumbent's agreement) to model the types of questions the Inquirer may usefully ask.

The prime intention behind TPR is to enable participants to talk about their experience of teaching, but its particular power lies in the opportunity it offers for the Recaller to use the recording as a trigger for recalling the experience, in terms of what he/she was thinking, feeling and doing at the time, and to share thoughts and feelings about teaching that he/she may not have expressed to anyone before.

Many new lecturers, in early rounds of TPR, get in touch with anxiety that they experience in their teaching. One reason why TPR takes place in small groups, membership of which remains stable through the year, is to help engender the trust and openness that develops alongside the exchange of negative, self-directed thoughts ("I'll make a mess of this; I'm not a competent teacher..."). Clearly, participant self-disclosure of this kind requires sensitive handling by the tutor. Techniques of stress management are being introduced into the programme to help recallers deal with negative self-talk.

One of the potentially most exciting and yet the simplest outcome of TPR is that the Recaller provides a running commentary on the action on the TV screen. In particular, the Recaller explores the thoughts (including intentions, assumptions, expectations and beliefs) and the feelings that lie behind and generate the observable behaviour. Thus, TPR opens up the existential world of the teacher and, in particular, reveals some of the bases for decisions made by the teacher, either in planning and preparation or in the 'real time' of classroom contact. It then becomes practicable for Recallers to check on the validity of their beliefs and to review the soundness of their decisions.

Another aim of TPR is to challenge the Recaller about his or her assumptions, expectations and beliefs. It is possible to challenge the Recaller by asking information-seeking questions ("Why did you do that?") but the initial model of TPR expressly excludes evaluative comment by any participant, including the tutor.

However, all this is what is envisaged in an ideal situation; it does not necessarily transpire. Some Recallers provide commentaries on their teaching that are mundane and/or sparse. In some cases, this improves with experience of TPR, which is a contrived process that does not come naturally to most participants. The Inquirer's role is crucial in facilitating a full and deep recall of the teaching experience. It is not surprising, then, that an inexperienced Recaller may have difficulty engaging effectively in TPR when working with an inexperienced Inquirer. Accordingly, novices should be encouraged to have realistic expectations of TPR and not to expect revelations (at least in the short term)!

Another problem is that members tend to rush to judgement on their own and others' teaching performance, without having seriously engaged initially in exploring and describing the teaching

experience. Since the ultimate aim of TPR is to enable teachers to monitor their practice throughout their professional lives, it is important to assist them to notice what they do and why they do it that way, before evaluating their behaviour.

A second model, used at a later stage, incorporates evaluation, given by each member according to guidelines devised to encourage constructive feedback. In this model, any member of the group may ask for the videotape to be stopped and the Inquirer asks rather different questions, such as:

- *How well do you think you did X?*
- *How do you know you did it well/badly?*
- *How do you feel about the way you did it?*
- *How might you improve your teaching in this respect?*

In the context of the lecturer training programme, feedback is given in writing on prescribed forms, some of which each Recaller is expected to incorporate, with a commentary, in a Teaching Portfolio that is submitted for formal assessment at the end of the year.

Although evaluation is discouraged in the original model of TPR, it has become clear since its adoption at Newcastle in 1988 that new lecturers need feedback from the start of the course. In the early stages of TPR, participants were convinced that unspoken criticism surrounded their videos. As a compromise, following (and technically outside of) each recall session, group members are invited to comment on one or two positive aspects of the Recaller's performance. The aim here is partly to counterbalance the generally negative self-criticism expressed by the Recaller, and to help him/her to perceive those effective behaviours that he/she may have taken for granted and/or to appreciate that ineffective practices were hardly disastrous! Members are asked to give positive feedback only when it is genuine and justified (and not simply to help the Recaller 'feel good'). In this way, recallers may recognise areas of competence which they previously did not recognise or value. Recallers are offered private feedback sessions with a tutor if they wish, outside the TPR sessions.

Although some participants approached TPR with the expectation that it would be stressful, most actually found it helpful and supportive. Many were also concerned that they would not be able to recall their thoughts and feelings in the teaching situation, but in fact video provides an excellent prompt for recall and this was very rarely a problem.

At University of Northumbria at Newcastle, TPR is scheduled roughly as follows:

September	Training programme commences; Participants give five-minute presentations, which are video-recorded.
November	TPR is demonstrated. Participants are issued with a Teaching Process Recall file containing instructions and prescribed forms, etc. Course members participate in a 'dry run' of TPR, using videotapes made in September.

January	Round 1 of TPR, following original model.
February to June	Rounds 2 to 5, following evaluative model. Training programme ends.

In the first few years of running the in-house training programme, there were insufficient tutors available to join every TPR group in every round of the process. Consequently, some groups failed to follow the guidelines closely and were somewhat disappointed in the outcomes. Recently, additional tutors have joined the course team and every TPR group is now accompanied by a tutor. Widening tutor involvement has necessitated the preparation of tutorial guidelines to ensure that tutors behave relatively consistently in each round. Partly as a result, participants report a much higher level of satisfaction and faster rate of progression with TPR.

Also in recent years, TPR has been linked to the practice and self-assessment of specific teaching competencies that the individual participant selects during a needs-identification unit at the end of the first term.

Acting on feedback from course members, the tutors are increasing the number of rounds of TPR and allocating more time for each round, to enable recall to be less rushed and more reflective. Our hope is that participants will progress to the point at which they can give and receive challenges to their professional practice in a way that is truthful, robust and exciting. Adhering to the belief that we should not ask course members to engage in activities that we do not, staff of the Educational Development Service are making increasing use of TPR themselves.

3. Reflections on TPR

Since its introduction into the programme, TPR has been an aspect of the course particularly highly valued by participants. This is evident in course feedback which we have received, and in the reflections on TPR which participants include in their teaching portfolio for the course. They place a high value on TPR chiefly because of its focus on them as an individual and their teaching performance. The fact that it is highly valued does not, of course, mean that participants do not identify some problems with it and it should be pointed out that a minority of individuals claim to gain nothing from the process at all. Some of these thought that they learnt more from viewing videos privately by themselves than from the group process. Others claimed that they would have gained more from a classroom observer who could have given them direct advice and feedback.

3.1 Video as a means of observation

Our video recordings are normally made using a fairly simple technical set up with a static camera and a radio microphone used by the lecturer. This has the limitations that often students are not seen or heard on the recording and it is usually not possible to see what is written up on the OHP or blackboard. Even with this simple set up, there are technical problems in setting up the video equipment and obtaining useful recordings. Some participants borrow equipment and set it up themselves. As this is something they are not practised at doing and which they often have to do hurriedly before a teaching session begins, sometimes with

students present and waiting, there are bound to be some mistakes. Other participants are able to rely on Departmental technicians, but even this does not prevent all cases of inadequate or totally failed recordings.

A single static camera is adequate for recording straightforward lecture sessions but it is more difficult to record interactive sessions, and very difficult to record teaching situations where lecturers are dealing with students on a one-to-one basis as in some studio-based teaching, laboratories, workshops and computer practicals.

Apart from technical problems there is the problem of the teaching situation being influenced because it is on video. Lecturers may feel that they have to put on a 'really good show'. This may lead them to do more preparation than normal and organise their teaching situation differently, but their best efforts may be thwarted because they feel more nervous than they normally do. Experience seems to be the cure in most cases. Most participants say that the camera tends to become 'invisible' with repeated use, but a minority feel that they never get used to it.

Students may also behave differently knowing that they are on camera. They may be less willing than normal to participate, they may try be on their best behaviour to help their lecturer out, or they may play up to the camera and be quite disruptive. In most cases, students seem to forget about the presence of the camera even sooner than lecturers do! Some lecturers are concerned that future teaching situations and their ongoing relationship with students will be affected by the fact that they video a session, but no examples of any discernible negative effect have ever occurred in our experience, and in some cases the lecturer-student relationship has been improved.

Watching a video recording means that you are able to notice things which you could not at the time. You can actually stand back and observe your own performance. Video gives the best replay possible of a live teaching situation, but the picture is to some extent false. Some participants go away from the process feeling that it has given them a student's perspective, or an objective view of what really happened. Both of these perceptions are somewhat misleading. In the real situation a great deal of contextual information is picked up which is missing on video playback. In addition, people view a video recording differently than they would a real life situation, looking for and picking up a rather different set of cues. Hence, some things loom large on video which would not have been noticeable or significant at the time and other things are missed.

3.2 The TPR process

Most participants are apprehensive of the TPR process but the majority find it useful in the end. Initially, participants find the rules difficult to adhere to and there are strong desires to dispense with them and revert to a more normal conversational mode of interaction within the group. This would be detrimental for several reasons. The initial restrictions are necessary to reduce the threat of being viewed in your teaching by fellow lecturers. They also focus the attention on recall and description. The first stage in knowing about your own teaching practice is to be able to observe it closely. In later stages evaluation can then be built on accurate descriptions rather than on superficial judgements.

Fixed-group membership over several TPR sessions is needed for groups to develop the atmosphere of trust and mutual support and challenge which is needed to make the process work well. On occasions when there has not been fixed membership, there has been a tendency towards full participation superficiality. Perhaps the atmosphere of trust was lacking, or there was no commitment towards assisting other group members and full participation.

Where groups work well, there is a tremendous benefit from sharing problems and successes. Participants found it very encouraging that they were rarely alone in any problems they experienced and also that they were rarely as bad as they thought they were. Almost all new HE lecturers are highly self-critical and the moderating influence of their group of colleagues enables them to gain a more balanced view of their own strengths and weaknesses. After the initial apprehension, TPR is generally enjoyable. In addition, at the meta-level, some participants have commented on the potential to learn experientially about some of the benefits and problems of group working by participating in the TPR groups.

3.3 What do participants learn about teaching?

The aspects of teaching performance which participants, in their portfolios and feedback to the course team, claim to have gained insight into through TPR are:

- *things to do with physical appearance and body language*
- *clarity of speech, structuring of lectures and explanations*
- *use of visual aids*
- *OHPs, blackboards, whiteboards and flipcharts*
- *interaction with students*
- *questioning, listening skills*

In the early stages of TPR, many participants are preoccupied with their physical appearance, voice and body language. Some maintain a concentration on their own physical appearance and fail to realise the potential of TPR beyond the easily observable matters of voice and gesture.

However, many participants have learnt about aspects of teaching not only from watching themselves on video but from watching their colleagues and, in the more evaluative stages of TPR, receiving useful comments from them and offering feedback to others. Many participants say that they pick up new ideas and realise new possibilities through watching video recordings of other people teaching and listening to what others say about their teaching. The comment is often made that seeing other people teach is a rare opportunity, as is the chance to really talk about teaching. For some participants, the extent to which they feel that they can learn from others depends on the similarities of their teaching situations, but others quite readily see underlying similarities in apparently quite different teaching situations.

Almost without exception, TPR is a confidence booster. Participants find that they are not doing as badly as they thought, and that other lecturers are not significantly better.

One of the key factors here is that participants come to really believe what they had often been told, that in most cases the fact that you are nervous and uncertain does not show in your performance. This is a very significant step towards increased confidence and increased willingness to experiment and try something different in their teaching. They also learn that it is unrealistic to expect to be perfect, and that the professional approach is to learn from mistakes and strive for continuing improvement.

The TPR process motivates participants to change and increases their determination to do a good job. It also leads to a realisation for many that their teaching behaviour can be an object of scrutiny and is something over which they can have some control. It is no longer simply an inevitable result of their personality, or something that just happens.

Although participants welcome evaluation and are glad to receive evaluative comment when this is allowed, one benefit of TPR is that they realise that there are few right ways to do things and that whilst others can offer comments, they cannot tell them the right thing to do in many teaching situations. Some participants are uncomfortable with this and by the end of the course are still looking for the right way to lecture or run seminars, but others talk about TPR helping to form their own personal views of what is good and bad practice in teaching and highlighting for them their own sense of having something personal and valuable to offer.

4. Recommendations for potential TPR users

1. Attend a workshop in Interpersonal Process Recall. Norman Kagan, its inventor, usually runs a workshop annually in the UK. Further information from David Jaques, Educational Methods Unit, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, OX3 OBP.

2. Anticipate and attempt to minimise the likely technical problems associated with video recording teaching practice and playing back the tape. Ensure that equipment and technical support are readily available. Issue technical guidelines to participants and provide training in the use of camcorders and radio mikes.

3. Provide instruction, demonstration and training in TPR.

4. Plan for at least four or five TPR sessions per Recaller if he or she is attending a year-long course.

5. Form TPR groups each of about five participants. Try to maintain stable membership. Allocate the roles (of Recaller, Inquirer, Observers, Timekeeper) on a rotating basis.

6. Provide each Recaller with their own videotape, which they retain.

7. Begin with the descriptive model of TPR and move on to evaluative models when the group (or the individual Recaller) is ready. Adhere to the rules prohibiting premature evaluation.

8. Allow at least 30 minutes per round of TPR, preferably 45 minutes if feedback is to be given to the Recaller during or at the end of each session.

9. Ensure that each TPR group has a tutor.

10. Offer an individual consultancy service to anyone who discloses concerns and anxieties too deep to deal with adequately in TPR.

11. Develop towards mutual recall, in which a lecturer and (some of) his/her students recall what happened in a teaching session. This is a potentially powerful means of examining the relationships between teaching and learning.

12. Practise what you preach. Engage in TPR with your colleagues.

13. Obtain copies of the TPR Pack (10 pages containing guidelines for participants) from the Educational Development Service, University of Northumbria at Newcastle, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8ST, tel. 0191 232 6002. Please advise quantity required.

References:

KAGAN, N. (1984) "Interpersonal process recall: basic methods and recent research" in Learson D (ed) Teaching psychological skills, Brooks Cole

9. Observing teaching in higher education:

Sally Brown, Educational Development Service
The University of Northumbria at Newcastle

For some time, together with my colleague, Peter Dove, I have been sharing with interested colleagues my views of training students in self- and peer-assessment, while we ourselves acknowledge to have what might be described as a relaxed attitude to observing the process.

I believe that transferring the focus of assessment from the tutor's requirements to the learners' needs is of immense value, so that assessment becomes a tool in the learning repertoire rather than just a summative event.

I have been struck in my recent ruminations about the soon-to-be imposed compulsory teacher observation by the parallels between the advantages of students' involvement in their own and their peers' assessment and those of lecturers' involvement in the observation and evaluation of their own teaching.

A system of teacher observation where an external or senior rare visitor calls into one or two lectures with a checklist of criteria against which to measure competence and performance is rather like the traditional examination system. Here the student is required at rare intervals to produce peak performance under stressful situations with little opportunity for dialogue with the examiner and no real chance to gain meaningful feedback on how things are going.

I propose instead a system of peer-observation, with groups of around four or five lecturers of similar status who together form an observation cell (compare with student learner cells). Each lecturer could then be observed on several occasions by some or all members of their cell in a variety of contexts.

Because the group would consist of peers, there would be a greater likelihood of valuable and productive feedback. Instead of a summative report, the cell members would be likely to generate among themselves a lively debate that could include, for example, assessment and tutorial work as well as just lecturing.

I assert (in SCED Paper No 63 on Self and Peer Assessment, jointly edited with Peter Dove) that peer-assessment has great value as part of a continuous process rather than as a one-off event; so too I suggest that peer-observation could form part of a year-round continuous system, with cell members taking it in turns to visit each other and holding regular brief feedback discussions.

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It is not yet clear what the outcomes required by the government will be: this system would enable as a minimum for the group itself to produce a collective report annually on their mutual observations which would probably be of greater depth and more insight than would be likely from one-off visits. If necessary, this could form the basis of a group discussion with the line manager who could thus take a moderating role as the teacher can in self- and peer assessment.

Any anxieties about the rigour and objectivity of the group are mirrored by the anxieties of some lecturers about the way in which students might engage (or fail to engage) themselves in self- and peer assessment. My observation on this is that when the criteria are overt, explicit and preferably (I would argue) generated by the participants themselves and when evaluative judgements have to be supported by clear evidence, then the quality of assessment is equally as high and often higher than in traditional tutor-led assessment.

Additionally, just as involving students in their own and their peers' assessment forms part of the learning process and helps students to develop a critical and reflective attitude to their own learning, so I would suggest could involving lecturers in the process of setting observation criteria, discussing and developing a joint awareness of the issues important to and the issues central for a group.

All members of the cell would benefit from the process because it is widely recognised that we learn much as lecturers from watching others teach. Just as students involved in peer assessment gain insights into the criteria on which they are being evaluated by their peers, so also will the observation cells be able to support each other and improve teaching standards by opening up the debate about what makes an effective teacher.

There is a lot of anxiety currently expressed about how teaching observation can be implemented in a cost-effective manner. Few would argue that it is possible to make a reasonable judgement about a person's ability to teach from a single visit and the duration of each visit would probably need to be on average an hour, perhaps.

Not all teaching takes place in a lecture theatre and a lecturer could reasonably expect to be observed carrying out the full range of teaching duties appropriate to the post such as running seminars, conducting tutorials, supervising laboratories and studios as well as conventional lecturing.

A lecturer might also argue that teaching only represents a proportion of the workload. Would it be reasonable to expect to be observed counselling students, interviewing prospective students, even invigilating examinations? This does not even begin to include the vast submerged iceberg of marking and administrative duties carried out. Simple mathematics suggest that if each lecturer is to be visited while carrying out the full range of teaching duties by a senior or external observer, this will be a mammoth task for someone who probably has plenty of other work to undertake themselves.

This parallels the situation of the busy lecturer who is currently faced with an increasing workload of assessment. The problem here is to continue to give students regular and detailed feedback without overburdening the lecturer. Peer assessment provides an opportunity to do this, without relinquishing responsibility or control altogether.

My solution is not cost-free, in that time will have to be allocated to the running of peer observation cells. Just as responsible lecturers will not throw their students into peer and self assessment without considerable amounts of preparaton and induction, so also will lecturers need time for risk-free rehearsal with support and training to develop proficiency.

I believe, therefore, that this system could have great value for all parties: the individual lecturers who will gain much from a mutually supportive group, the Departmental Heads who would have access to the summary reports produced by observation cells without having to incur potential hostility caused by being seen to intrude into the classrooms of established and experienced teachers and the institution as a whole, which I believe would lead to an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning.

An abridged version of this article appeared in the SCED magazine, The New Academic, in July 1992.

There is another provides a range of checklists which can be used for peer observation

10. Peer-assessment: checklists 7 - 20

Checklist 7

Observer's Name _____ Place _____

Lecturer's Name _____ Date _____

Lesson Check List

1. Were the aims and objectives of the session clear?
2. Was the subject developed within the time allowed?
3. Amount of material too much, too little or about right?
4. Were essential points emphasised?
   Was any unnecessary material included?
5. Did the lecturer discover/illustrate/explain points of difficulty?
6. Did the lecturer promote and maintain interest?
7. Were questions framed to stimulate thought?
   Were questions distributed around the group?
8. Did the lecturer summarise/recapitulate?
9. Teaching Aids: were the following of good quality and used effectively?
   a) Blackboard/white board
   b) Overhead transparencies
   c) Handouts
   d) Other aids (specify)

10. Speech
    Was the voice
    a) audible?
    b) interesting?

11. Manner and Approach
    a) was class discipline satisfactory?
    b) was the lecturer enthusiastic?
    c) were there any distracting mannerisms?

12. a) Overall performance (Underline) — Excellent/Above average / Average/Below average / Poor
    b) Overall value
    Was the session a useful educative experience or an efficient training session?

Other comments

(Adapted from a schedule produced by Keighley College, City & Guilds 7307)

Checklist 8

Venue	is the room adequate in terms of teaching, lighting, heating A/V aids etc?
Context	are links drawn between this session and previous ones/other parts of the course?
Structure	is teaching material well organised?
Level	could students cope with the material? Was there any provision for students experiencing any difficulties?
Clarity	was the material clearly presented and were explanations understood by students?
Use of examples	did these help students to grasp the key points and were examples related to the students' knowledge?
Handouts	were these appropriately used? Did they help in conveying the subject matter and develop students' understanding of the subject matter?
Audibility	could the lecturer be heard and seen by all the students?
Pace/timing	was the material presented at an appropriate pace? Did the lecturer keep to time?
Enthusiasm / interest	was the lecturer lively and enthusiastic about the subject and was the presentation interesting and helped to enhance and sustain student interest?
Interaction	did the lecturer invite students to ask questions / make comments? Did the lecturer draw upon student interests and experiences?

(From Effective Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, Module 12. Evaluating Teaching and Courses from an active Learning Perspective Part 3, 1992. CVCP M J O'Neil and G Pennington).

Teaching observation questionnaire

Checklist 9

SESSION _____

SESSION PERIOD _____

DAY _____

TYPE OF CLASS _____ LECTURE ☐ SEMINAR ☐ TUTORIAL ☐

No OF STUDENTS F ☐ M ☐

1. Teaching methods

(circle where appropriate) Lecture Seminar Tutorial Buzz group syndicates
Brainstorming Simulation Case study Role-play
Structured learning Independent learning C A L
Other (Specify)

Approx. time for each method used.

2. Presentation methods

OHP Slides Strips Film Video Sound Network
Flipchart Blackboard Handbooks Photocopies

3. Note-taking

(i) Were notes dictated? Yes ☐ No ☐
Or appeared to be dictated? (frequent pauses) Yes ☐ No ☐

(ii) Was there sufficient time for students to take notes?

Sufficient time	Average	Insufficient time
☐	☐	☐

(iii) Did you detect any change in the speed of exposition over the session?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, why did this occur?

4. (i) What use, if any, were made of pauses/silences

Frequent	Quite Frequent	Seldom	Never

(ii) Check the number of pauses / silences over two 5 minute periods.

(iii) What was the average length?

5. Assess the amount of student talk, lecture talk and silence over two separate 5 minute periods.

Put a tick in the appropriate column every 5 seconds.*

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total																								
Lecturer																								
Student																								
Silence																								

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total																								
Lecturer																								
Student																								
Silence																								

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total												
Lecturer												
Student												
Silence												

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total																								
Lecturer																								
Student																								
Silence																								

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total																								
Lecturer																								
Student																								
Silence																								

	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Total												
Lecturer												
Student												
Silence												

6. Please indicate by a circle every time the lecturer asks a question.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

Student feedback

Please indicate by a circle each time a student responds to a question.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

* Developed from G Brown, USDU/CVCP

7. Was use made of examples (score) or anecdotes (scores)

8. Teaching space and facilities

9. Communication factors (noise, vision, etc.)

10. Other comments.

G O Jones

Lecture rating form

Checklist 10

Lecturer: **Date:**

		Rating *Circle appropriate number*		Comments
VOICE	clearly audible; well mounted	5 4 3 2 1	largely inaudible; monotone	
PACE	appropriate number of words and ideas in the time	5 4 3 2 1	too fast or too slow; too many or two few ideas	
NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	Good use of gesture and eye contact; no distracting mannerisms	5 4 3 2 1	poor or distracting use of gesture and eyes; annoying mannerisms	
ORGANISATION AND PREPARATION	well organised, eg. introduction to topic, planned repetition, summaries, links between ideas well explained	5 4 3 2 1	badly organised; confusing presentation; poorly explained	
USE OF OHP, BLACKBOARDS ETC.	clear; well presented appropriate use; supportive to presentation	5 4 3 2 1	cramped; illegible; inappropriate use; detracts from presentation	
ATTITUDE	friendly, responsive enthusiastic; creates positive impression	5 4 3 2 1	creates negative impression; dull unfriendly, unresponsive	

(source : unknown)

Feedback on group leadership - checklist

Checklist 11

The task of the leader is to get the group actively participating in a discussion on a topic about which he/she has a lot of expert knowledge and the group can be expected to have little.

Please tick in the columns for each occasion the leader uses a particular intervention.

Glances Round the group								
Looks for Signals								
Uses Non-Verbal Communication								
Brings In and Shuts Out								
Turns Questions Back								
Reflects								
Supports and Values								
Checks and Builds								
Re-directs								
Asks Testing Questions								
Asks Clarifying Questions								
Asks Elaborating Questions								

Source : Oxford Brookes University

A discussion leadership rating scale

Checklist 12

The leader.....		Well Done	Attempted To	Not Done
1.	presented the problems for discussion clearly			
2.	promoted respect between individuals in the group			
3.	showed sensitivity to the feelings of individuals in the group			
4.	created an atmosphere for the free expression of opinion			
5.	established good relations between her/himself and the group members			
6.	kept the discussion relevant			
7.	found healthy outlets for emotional tension			
8.	encouraged understanding between group members			
9.	protected individuals from unnecessary group pressure			
10.	asked questions designed to promote a free response			
11.	was aware of her or his own position as a group member			
12.	made clear the purpose of the group's task			
13.	allowed the group members to express criticisms			
14.	allowed individuals to modify their opinions without losing face			
15.	encouraged independence of thought			
16.	encourage open-mindedness			
17.	helped individuals become more articulate			
18.	made the group face 'issues'			
19.	made group members responsible for their own views			
20.	inspired confidence in group members about her/himself as leader			
21.	allowed scope for the expression of minority opinions			
22.	encouraged reasoned argument			
23.	was a good listener			
24.	provided an atmosphere free from assessment			
25.	helped members accept various levels of ability among peers			
26.	created a cohesive group atmosphere			
27.	encouraged pooling of knowledge within the group			
28	provided information when called upon to do so			
29.	suggested ways in which to follow up the discussion			
30.	reflected group feelings accurately in summing up.			

(Source unknown)

Observation schedule

Checklist 13

Observation of Discussion		Well Done	Attempted To	Not Done
The Tutor/Leader.....				
1.	outlined the problems of the discussion clearly to participants	.....	.....	.....
2.	made clear the purpose of the group's task	.....	.....	.....
3.	promoted respect for individuals in the group	.....	.....	.....
4.	showed sensitivity for individuals in the group	.....	.....	.....
5.	created an atmosphere for the free expression of opinion	.....	.....	.....
6.	established good relations with group members	.....	.....	.....
7.	kept the discussion relevant	.....	.....	.....
8.	found healthy outlets for emotional tension	.....	.....	.....
9.	encouraged understanding between group members	.....	.....	.....
10.	protected group members from unnecessary group pressure	.....	.....	.....
11.	asked questions designed to promote free response	.....	.....	.....
12.	was aware of own position as a group member	.....	.....	.....
13.	allowed the group members to express criticisms	.....	.....	.....
14.	allowed individuals to modify their opinions without losing face	.....	.....	.....
15.	encouraged independence of thought	.....	.....	.....
16.	encouraged open-mindedness	.....	.....	.....
17.	helped individuals to become more articulate	.....	.....	.....
18.	made the group face issues	.....	.....	.....
19.	made group members responsible for their own views	.....	.....	.....
20.	inspired confidence in group members with own leadership	.....	.....	.....
21.	encouraged reasoned argument	.....	.....	.....
22.	allowed opportunity for the expression of minority opinions	.....	.....	.....
23.	listened carefully	.....	.....	.....
24.	provided an atmosphere free from judgement	.....	.....	.....
25.	helped members accept differences in ability amongst group members	.....	.....	.....
26.	created a cohesive group atmosphere	.....	.....	.....
27.	encouraged the pooling of knowledge within the group	.....	.....	.....
28.	provided information when called to do so	.....	.....	.....
29.	suggested ways, and provided opportunity in which to follow up the discussion	.....	.....	.....
30.	reflected upon group feeling accurately in summing up	.....	.....	....

(Source unknown)

Learning group discussion

Checklist 14

DISCUSSION LEADER ☐ TOPIC ☐

WAS THE DISCUSSION TOO BRIEF ☐
ABOUT RIGHT ☐
TOO LONG ☐ TO BE USEFUL

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	No Feelings either way	Agree strongly	Agree
Use of questions					
Asked LEADING or DIRECT questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asked CLOSED or CIRCULAR questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asked LONG or OBSCURE questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asked OPEN or HELPFUL questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Management of group					
Used CRITICISM of other members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Used PRAISE of other members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deliberately involved any silent members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Deliberately suppressed any noisy members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Management of topic					
Allowed irrelevant discussion	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Kept discussion relevant to the topic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Management of the group's process					
Ignored disagreements	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resolved conflict by changing subject	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Resolved conflict by conciliation / compromise	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Leader's own role					
Stated own views clearly	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Withheld own views	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Introduced humour where appropriate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Was serious where appropriate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Summarised discussion to help members	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

GENERAL COMMENTS

Adopted by Gus Pennington / Gareth Jones, Teesside University
from an unknown source

Observation of lecturer with small groups

Checklist 15

Behaviour as a Member of a Group

	High	Low
Positive Tasks		
Initiating		
Clarifying		
Seeking information		
Giving information		
Integrating		
Consensus testing		
Positive maintenance		
Encouraging / supporting		
Mediating		
Standard setting		
Compromising		
Gate keeping		
Releasing tension		
Expressing group feelings		
Being open		
Negative		
Dominating		
Manipulating		
Blocking		
Belittling		
Distracting		
Splitting		

(Adapted from "Learning in Groups" David Jaques, Kogan Page 1992)

Evaluating seminar and tutorial work: who's in control?

This simple framework provides a useful way for academic staff to reflect upon and evaluate the pattern of interaction that develops in small groups (up to ten students) during tutorial, seminar or similar teaching sessions. It is designed to help the participants become more conscious of their contribution to such learning. The framework is not meant as a means of developing exact records and detailing what is happening when they meet in group sessions.

Who's in control?

Checklist 16

Tutor Behaviours		Student Behaviours
listening		listening
drawing out		drawing out
reflecting back		reflecting back
clarifying		clarifying
questioning		questioning
summarising		summarising
suggesting		suggesting
advising		advising
prescribing		prescribing

- *which behaviours occurred most often?*
- *what initiated the behaviour?*
- *what was the balance between tutor and student control?*

(From Effective Learning in Higher Education Module 12, Evaluating Teaching & Courses from an Active Learning Perspective - Part 2. 1992 CVCP. M O'Neill & G Pennington)

Checklist 17

This is a more comprehensive checklist for small groups and concentrates attention of the observer on the positive aspects of the role of the lecturer.

Mechanics
Lecturer ensures that the:

- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]

Preparation
The lecturer:

- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ [illegible]
- ✓ states the objectives for the activity
- ✓ lets students know what will be expected of them in the session
- ✓ helps identify specific outcomes for the discussion

Choice of Topic
The lecturer:

- ✓ uses questions to stimulate discussion
- ✓ prevents or terminates monopoly of discussion
- ✓ creates opportunities for all students to participate
- ✓ actively involves individuals who are not participating
- ✓ recognises potential contributors and makes them an opening
- ✓ reinforces infrequent contributors
- ✓ protects students from the penalties of being wrong
- ✓ accepts silences

Quality of Interaction
The lecturer:

- ✓ intervenes when pauses become too long
- ✓ is willing to abort an exhausted topic
- ✓ listens
- ✓ reminds students to listen to one another
- ✓ shares perceptions of group processes
- ✓ indicates that personal attacks are out of order
- ✓ helps students to accept correction or constructive criticism
- ✓ calls attention to and rewards the playing of facilitative group roles
- ✓ encourages students to acknowledge comments of others by summarising them
- ✓ relieves tension
- ✓ allows time for the evaluation of the discussion itself

Quality and content of discussion

The lecturer:

- ✓ *sees that the group reviews information* from input material before going on to *matters of opinion and judgement*
- ✓ *sees that errors of fact, logic, or rhetor* ce are corrected
- ✓ *introduces material overlooked that* ave been missed
- ✓ *points out logical or factual inconsist*
- ✓ *questions unwarranted conclusions* nwanted conclusions
- ✓ *helps the group examine the accuracy* statements, the relevance of examples *and examples and the adequacy of sup*
- ✓ *helps the group distinguish between* a fact
- ✓ *presses students to define their ideas* clearly expressed
- ✓ *encourages students to relate their* tion, relate it to other ideas, or *ideas)*
- ✓ *monitors when discussion gets off to* point *moves students back to task when*
- ✓ *summarizes discussion periodically* lents search for a solution
- ✓ *draws attention to points made or* used earlier in discussion

Role of the lecturer

The lecturer:

- ✓ *makes own role clear and sticks to it*
- ✓ *states the topic at the beginning and re* ates it as needed
- ✓ *revises the formulation to comment on* ch student's comment
- ✓ *paraphrases student comments to rein* ce understanding
- ✓ *uses non verbal cues to direct discussi* without intruding
- ✓ *aims to not having an answer*
- ✓ *aims losing control of discussion (!)* v did we get here?)

Controversial issues

The lecturer:

- ✓ *encourages expression of differences* opinion
- ✓ *sets up situations in which students* have to think about both sides of an issue
- ✓ *encourages students to challenge, ch* question, evaluate one another's *contributions*
- ✓ *accepts alternative points of view whe* there is legitimate variation in position
- ✓ *supports the right of contributors who* old minority or unpopular views
- ✓ *attempts to mediate or resolve differe* s or conflicts among group members
- ✓ *refrains from introducing own opinion* o avoid biasing discussion
- ✓ *encourages students to examine a vari* y of points of view before drawing *conclusions or making judgements*

Summarising
The lecturer:

- draws together contributions of various members of the group
- allows time to consider implication of the content of the discussion outside the classroom
- requires the group to make a conscious effort to relate the discussion to ideas and concepts acquired in other meetings or other learning situations
- summarises and draws new conceptualisations at the end
- encourages students to conclude with a review including:
    * restatement of position taken
    * checking if any positions have been modified and why
    * consideration of future action
- suggest follow-up activities related to the discussion ("Watch for....." "Try this..... "Why not read.....")

Adapted from "Looking for good teaching: a guide to peer observation" by Barbara Helling in The Journal of Staff, Program and Organisational Development Vol. 6, No. 4, Winter 1988. 3

Checklist 18

A Peer Evaluation Form *(Source - George Brown)*

Rating Key
Taking into account the current level of appointment of the staff member

A	=	Performance typical of the expectations for this level of appointment.
B	=	Performance above normal expectations.
C	=	Performance well above normal expectations.
D	=	Outstanding or exceptional performance.
N	=	Staff member has not been able to demonstrate typical performance (for whatever reasons).

		REVIEWER A	REVIEWER B	REVIEWER C
1.	**STUDENTS**	Student reaction to this staff member is favourable		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
2.	**TEACHING MATERIALS**	The teaching materials used are of the highest quality.		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
3.	**QUALITY OF TASKS**	Students perform well on tasks which allow them to demonstrate achievement of the stated goals.		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
4.	**SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE**	This staff member is knowledgeable in the subjects taught.		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
5.	**COMMITMENT**	This staff member strives for excellence in teaching.		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
6.	**THIS STAFF MEMBER COMPARED WITH OTHERS**	This staff member stands out among peers as a teacher.		
		N A B C D	N A B C D	N A B C D
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –
		– – – – –	– – – – –	– – – – –

HEAD OF SCHOOL COMMENTS Comment, highlighting agreement or disagreement among the reviewers.

10.1 Giving and receiving feedback

The "Evaluating your Teaching section" in the second SCED Induction Pack SCED Paper 68, deals in detail with Giving and Receiving Feedback (pages 23-30) but it is worth quoting this paragraph:

"Giving and receiving feedback to another person can be a powerful way of providing help if it is constructively handled by both people concerned. Feedback is most effective if it takes place in an atmosphere of trust and each individual is prepared to listen to the needs of the other and attends to their needs. It is important to watch out for the temptation to give advice. You need to be thinking about whose needs you are satisfying when you provide feedback."

Points to remember when you are debriefing:

- focus on behaviour rather than the person
- be specific
- give feedback as soon as possible after the event
- it must be known what use is to be made of the outcomes of the event
- feedback must be confidential
- give positive feedback first
- be aware of the balance between positive and negative feedback
- positive feedback on its own does not allow room for improvement and negative feedback alone can be depressing
- what is important is how and when you give feedback not just a matter of what you say
- always allow those being debriefed to say something about their session first before you give feedback
- allow them to highlight problems and possible solutions first
- effective feedback should be focussed on the amount of information that the receiver can make use of rather than the amount you feel capable of giving

When you are being debriefed:

- listen carefully
- check for understanding
- don't be defensive
- always assume that the information is for your benefit and that it is intended for improving your performance
- if you have sought feedback make it clear what kind of feedback you are seeking
- notice your own reactions
- thank the giver of feedback

After the debriefing session you should ask yourself the following questions (Oxford Brookes University):

Having reviewed your teaching skills, answer the following questions:

- What aspects of your teaching do you feel you ought to improve?
- what aspects do you feel you would like to work on to improve?
- what do you need to do in order to improve in this area?
- who might be able to help you?
- who or what might stop you and what can you do about it?
- how will you know when you have improved?

Or, perhaps simply ask yourself.....

Next time I give this session I will.....

10.2 Developing a Schedule Checklist 19

Adapted from Network Teesside Polytechnic Newsletter Issue 1985

The following schedule has been developed for use by tutors on a post-graduate certificate course for new staff at the University of Teesside. It is intended as some kind of a contract so that both the tutor and the new member of staff are asked to agree on groundrules for the observed session; what needs to be done before the session; what the observer will be using to check performance and what needs to be done after the session in terms of self-reflection and debriefing.

Name: _____ Dept: _____
Name of Observer: _____
Session period and date: _____ Room: _____
Student group: _____ M _____ F _____
Teaching strategies employed: _____

Presentation methods: _____

Groundrules for Observing:

- The processes must be known and the outcomes be confidential
- It must be non-judgemental but supportive
- Agree when to observe
- Agree what to observe
- There must be a briefing session first to discuss rationale and groundrules
- Agree what methods will be used for observing.

So before the session you must decide:

- the content
- the teaching strategies to be used
- the student activities during and after the session
- how the session could be evaluated
- what specific activities will the observer be observing and appraising and what instruments will be used.

At the beginning of the session ....
the lecturer should:

- introduce the observer, if it is the first time, and explain exactly to the students why the observer is there.

Observation Checklists

The following checklist can be used with large groups of students. Do remember that not all the statements will be applicable to the session and you may well want to add further comments at the end.

Observation of Lecturer with Large Groups

Quality of Planning and Preparation	**not very well**	**well**	**very well**	**poor**
How well did the lecturer.....?				
1. identify key objectives in terms of				
knowledge	.....	.....	.....	....
skills	.....	.....	.....	.....
attitudes	.....	.....	.....	.....
2. develop, practise and encourage these key objectives	.....	.....	.....	.....
3. identify central concepts and processes	.....	.....	.....	.....
4. match content with student ability	.....	.....	.....	.....
5. match content with past experience	.....	.....	.....	.....
6. differentiate material to cater for individual differences	.....	.....	.....	.....
7. differentiate material to cater for previous learning	.....	.....	.....	.....
8. use appropriate visuals to support learning	.....	.....	.....	.....
9. how well did these visuals convey the intended message	.....	.....	.....	.....

Quality of Lecture Performance	**not very well**	**well**	**very well**	**poor**
How well did the lecturer.....?				
1. secure attention	.....	.....	.....	.....
2. give clear instructions that could be achieved	.....	.....	.....	.....
3. reframe instructions to aid understanding	.....	.....	.....	.....
4. introduce tasks effectively	.....	.....	.....	.....
5. vary the mode of presentation to avoid boredom	.....	.....	.....	.....
6. capture and maintain student interest	.....	.....	.....	.....
7. show the shape and structure of the presentation	.....	.....	.....	.....
8. control the pace and timing	.....	.....	.....	.....
9. round off and conclude learning events	.....	.....	.....	.....
10. make appropriate use of examples	.....	.....	.....	.....
11. stress important points	.....	.....	.....	.....
12. make clear the aims of the session	.....	.....	.....	.....
13. provide alternative explanations of difficult points	.....	.....	.....	.....
14. make use of space/furniture in the classroom in order to facilitate tasks	.....	.....	.....	.....

Quality of Student-Lecturer Interaction

		not very well	well	very well	poorly
How well did the lecturer.....?					
1.	motivate the whole class	.....	.....	.....	.....
	groups	.....	.....	.....	.....
	individuals	.....	.....	.....	.....
2.	mix lecture talk and student talk	.....	.....	.....	.....
3.	use closed questions to test knowledge	.....	.....	.....	.....
4.	open questions to encourage thinking and to evaluate understanding	.....	.....	.....	.....
5.	use verbal and non-verbal cues to manage student responses	.....	.....	.....	.....
6.	demonstrate his/her knowledge of students and awareness of particular problems	.....	.....	.....	.....
7.	establish an appropriate level of rapport with the whole class	.....	.....	.....	.....
	groups	.....	.....	.....	.....
	individuals	.....	.....	.....	.....
8.	change language register from the whole group to individual	.....	.....	.....	.....
	between individuals	.....	.....	.....	.....

Additional Comments.....

Debriefing - and reflecting on your own performance

Checklist 20

At the end of your own teaching :

- Write a short account of what took place. Do this as soon as possible after the end of the session. Don't attempt to evaluate the session or your performance - concentrate upon what you think actually happened.
- Try and categorise your observations - planned and unplanned activities.

or perhaps, simply ask yourself the question ... Next time I give this session I will .....

When you are being debriefed by someone :

- listen carefully
- check for understanding
- don't be defensive
- always remember that the information is for your benefit and that it is intended for improving your performance
- If you have sought feedback make it clear what kind of feedback you are seeking
- notice your own reactions.

After Debriefing

Consider :

- what aspects of your teaching do you feel you ought to improve
- what aspects do you feel you would like to work on or improve
- what do you need to do in order to improve in this area
- who might be able to help you
- who or what might stop you and what can you do about it
- how will you know when you have improved.

11. Observation of teaching: guidelines for observers and observed:

Hazel Fullerton
University of Plymouth

Introduction

These notes are intended to provide advice and ideas to staff undertaking observation of teaching, both those observing and those being observed. They are only a first line of advice. Further support is available from training sessions and through the Academic Staff Development service.

The notes are not intended to be prescriptive. The process of observation should be developed between those staff involved. Departments or groups of staff may attune the exact processes to suit personal and departmental needs.

Reasons for observing teaching

Observation is one part of the overall professional development process of teaching staff. It is related to, but not an integral part of, the University's staff appraisal and development procedures.

The main aim is to help staff, particularly in a time of rapid change, critically reflect upon their teaching through planned observation, discussion and analysis. This may result in staff trying out new ideas, reaffirming what is being done or modifying existing techniques in order to help students better learn.

The process will help raise the level of awareness of the process and practice of teaching within departments and across the University.

In those parts of the University where observation of teaching is common (eg the staff induction scheme, the Faculty of Education) both those being observed, and those observing, almost always find it a very useful and formative exercise.

Overview of the suggested procedures

- agree who is going to observe the session
- decide upon the session to be observed
- decide upon the observation process
- undertake the observation
- observed and observer discuss the session
- observed and observer agree on outcomes to be recorded
- observed and observer agree on summary notes which can be passed to observed's appraiser if the observed so wishes

Documenting information

Documenting the observation is optional. However, it is difficult to give and to remember constructive feedback without some form of record. Also, the act of writing can crystallise thoughts and aid reflection.

The only required written record is for a brief summary of key points arising from the observation to be agreed between observed and observer. Form T03 *(see page 85)* provides a suggested format for this summary. Should the observed so wish, this summary can be used as the basis of discussion at the observed's next appraisal and development interview. If this is done, it should be noted that the information is confidential to the observed, observer and appraiser, unless the observed wishes otherwise.

Two other forms are provided at the end of these notes. Form TO1 *(see page 84)* may be used by the observed to help formulate their thoughts about what they wish to gain from the observation. Form T02 can be used by the observer to summarise their feedback to the observed. (See page 84)

These issues are discussed below:

Before the observation

Selecting the observer

It is crucial that the observer is known to, and respected by, the person being observed. There should be a professional and trusting relationship between the two for the observation process to provide maximum benefit to both.

The observer could be a colleague teaching within the same department as the observed, someone who has similar teaching areas, the observed's line manager, a colleague in a different department who has a similar teaching style etc.

In choosing the observer, it may be appropriate to involve someone who has an overview of potential observers, for example the observed's appraiser, subject leader, course coordinator or head of department. It may be that observed and observer decide to interchange their roles, each observing the other.

To spread awareness of practice as widely as possible, and to avoid overloading, any one member of staff should not observe a total of more than 5 sessions in any one year.

Deciding upon what session to observe

It is best to decide which session(s) is to be observed in discussion between observed and observer. The session could be a lecture, seminar, tutorial, laboratory or field-based work. At first, it is often best to choose a session where the observed is confident, although experience shows that maximum benefit is likely to be gained where something new, difficult or unfamiliar is being tried out. It is easier to recall detail immediately after the sessions, so try to select a session when both the observer and the observed are free for the following hour for discussion.

Aim for no more than a one hour observation. This could be a complete lecture, or part of a practical session (say the first and last 30 minutes).

The observed should notify their appraiser of the name of the observer and the date of the session being observed.

Deciding upon what is to be done during the observation

There are many ways to observe sessions, ranging from the open and unplanned to use of highly detailed, pre-designed observation schedules. In most cases, somewhere in between is most appropriate. A possible model is described in the next section.

Observed and observer should spend some time before the session deciding what is to be done. Things to consider include:

- what the observed wants to achieve from the observation
- where the observer should sit, or whether it is appropriate to wander around (in practical sessions it may be valuable to talk with or observe the students)
- how the observer is going to record information about the session
- when observed and observer will meet to discuss the session; this is best done within a short-time of the observed session (ideally immediately after, but if not, then as soon as possible); it is easier to recall detail immediately!
- what documentation needs to be prepared.

During the observation

The process

There are four stages in the teaching process which can be identified in any lecture, seminar, tutorial, field-work or laboratory session:

- planning prior to the session
- introduction
- delivering and implementing the plans
- conclusions

Questions for the observation

The observer and observed should have a number of aspects and questions in mind when discussing and designing the process of observation. These could include:

- planning the session:
  - how does the plan relate to previous sessions?
  - are there clear aims and objectives?
  - how does the session fit in with the overall programme for the module?
  - are resources (AVA, handouts, tasks) available at the appropriate points?
- introducing the session to the students:
  - is it clear to the students how this session relates to previous work?
  - does the introduction "set the scene" for the session, giving students a clear overview of the way it will develop?
- delivering and developing the plans:
  - is the communication of ideas relevant, clear and coherent?
  - is there opportunity for the students to clarify their understanding? How is this handled?
- what strategies are used to gain attention, to refocus at intervals and to ensure attention is maintained?
  - are the students motivated?
  - are the teaching methods appropriate to the tasks in hand?
  - are there opportunities for the students to think, question and feed back?
  - what modes of delivery are used; is more than one mode used?
- concluding the session:
  - is the session drawn to a satisfactory conclusion (or an on-going series of conclusions)?
  - is there a summary of the main ideas or a review of the point reached so far?
  - does the conclusion look forward to the next session?

Observation methods

There are several ways of observing the process and it is useful for the observer and observed to have these in mind at the stage of planning for the observation. The questions above give some indication of the sort of things to record or remember, but observer and observed will probably also wish to add other aspects.

Observation methods could include:

- a chronological record of what happened throughout the session which can provide a rich, if somewhat unfocused, set of points or notes for later discussion;
- before or during the session the observer and observed may decide to focus on specific aspects (eg strategies for motivating students, use of AVA, teaching strategies used in a workshop or laboratory session);
- a set of random notes or random observations can be made at regular or irregular intervals during the session for later discussion;
- the session could be video-recorded for analysis and discussion of techniques used.

A possible model of an observation

- spend a few minutes making general notes using some of the questions and ideas outlined above;
- identify from those points, one or more areas for further specific and detailed observation;
- observe those specific aspects more closely, recording/remembering in such a way that it will provide constructive feedback for the observed.

Example 1 : observation of a lecture

- General notes made in the introductory stage in respect of, for example, clarity of presentation, presentation of aims for the session, strategies used to gain and keep attention (eye contact, use of voice, changes of pace), use of AVA, introduction of new content or perceived response of the students.
- Decide to focus on strategies used to gain and keep attention and the resulting responses of students.
- Note each observed instance of these.
- Record/remember in a way that will enable constructive discussion to take place after the session.

Example 2 : observation of a lecture

- General notes made in the introductory stage in respect of, for example, clarity of presentation, presentation of aims for the session, strategies used to gain and keep attention (eye contact, use of voice, changes of pace), use of AVA, introduction of new content or perceived responses of the students.
- Decide to focus on strategies used to gain and keep attention and the resulting responses of students.
- Note each observed instance of these.
- Record in a way that will enable constructive discussion/evaluation to take place after the session.

Remember

- it is generally more productive if the observer observes against the criteria agreed in initial discussions with the observed;
- the aim of the observation is to help improve the skills of the observed, therefore quality feedback is essential. (However, it is likely that the observer will also gain some useful ideas!)

After the observation

The purpose of discussion and analysis after the observation is to provide an objective but informed view of the session allowing the observed to gain from that independent perspective. However, it will usually also lead to more wide-ranging discussion of approaches to teaching and learning. Ideas and solutions to issues are often generated.

Discussion after the observation

Obviously it's easier to recall detail immediately, so try to select a session when both observer and observed are free for the following hour for discussion (or as soon as possible).

It is useful for the observed to open the discussion with thoughts as to how the session went; what aims and objectives were achieved; what went well and what was disappointing; or to invite the observed to self-assess against the previously agreed criteria.

If the observer has made a chronological set of notes, these help jog memories and raise questions. The observer might leave the observed to read quietly through the notes for 5 minutes and then encourage response to particular points. Alternatively, the observer may take the observed through the notes, inviting comment.

Either way, the observer can help by using prompting questions throughout the discussion, such as:

- What were you trying to achieve at this point?
- How did you feel about this part?
- Could you have achieved that another way?
- What was the student involvement here?
- How could you have got some, or more, interaction going?
- At what stages were the students having to think?
- How does this relate to the students existing knowledge? Can they see that relationship?
- How can you check if that objective has been achieved?
- Do you need to find ways of improving their motivation on this?
- What were you most pleased about?

A whole range of points are likely to arise. It will help if half a dozen or so can be summarised. That may take the form of identifying three things that have gone really well and three to think about or work on for the future - either to adapt existing practice or to attempt an alternative approach. It may be appropriate to discuss a more general identification of good practice. These points should be agreed between the observed and observer.

The follow-up

Within the next couple of days, the observed needs to complete a summary (form T03 or similar). If possible, this should be undertaken in collaboration with the observer; if not, the observer should at least see and agree the summary.

The purpose of leaving this short gap is to allow time for reflection, both on the session and on the observation process. Reflection is an important part of the learning cycle (Kolb and Fry; 1975). Teaching staff generally do reflect on their teaching, be it on the journey home or relaxing in the bath! However, much of that reflection is lost if is not firmed-up in some way. The act of writing it up can crystallise the process so that it becomes more positive for the observed. It also enables the observer to improve their observation and feedback skills.

What happens next?

If the observed wishes, they can send a copy of the form to their appraiser, together with other documentation, at least two weeks before their next appraisal/development interview. This could form a useful basis for discussion.

The observed may wish to organise another observation, or develop a personal action plan.

Reference:

Kolb and Fry " *Towards an Applied Theory of Experiential Learning*" C. Cooper ed Theories of Group Process, London, 1975.

Checklist 21

Observation of teaching
Preparation form for the observed (form T01)

Group: _____ Date: _____

No of Students: _____ Topic: _____

What would you like feedback on?
(What particular aspects, eg. use of OHP, board, your voice, interaction with the students, use of new technique, etc?)

Any factors your observer needs to be aware of?
(e.g any changes or suggestions you have incorporated; are you trying out something new; group / individual problems, issues, etc)

Observation of teaching
Observer's comments (form T02)

This form can be used to summarise your observation to the person being observed

Group: _____ Date: _____

No of Students: _____ Topic: _____

Three things which went really well

Three things to think about for the future?

Observation of teaching
Summary (form T03)

This summary should be completed by the observed in discussion with the observer. It can be fed into the staff appraisal and development process by the observed.

Group: _____ Date: _____

No of Students: _____ Topic: _____

Three things which went really well

Any other comments

Observation of teaching
Summary of development needs (form T04)

Observed: _____ Observer: _____

Group: _____ Date: _____

No of Students: _____ Topic: _____

What staff development needs have been identified as a result of the observation and what action is necessary:

Needs	Action necessary

Any other comments

Course member's notes about session

Please complete **before** the session to be observed

Particular factors/problems taken into account in planning session:

Any changes made since similar session taught previously:

Any aspects of this session new to you:

Would you welcome any particular advice / help for this session, or would you like anything to be specifically commented upon:

How have you incorporated suggestion made previously:

Against which criteria would you wish your session to be evaluated?

Observer's comments

Satisfactory ☐
Unsatisfactory ☐

Name:	_____	Date:	_____
Observer:	_____	No. of students:	_____
Group:	_____ _____	Start time:	_____
Topic:	_____	Finish time:	_____

Teaching / learning aims; teaching plan:

Orientation, use of student's knowledge, links with previous sessions:

Personal presentation, questioning, variety of methods used:

Course member's note about observation

Please complete **after** discussion with your observer about the session, and post to the observer.

How helpful were the comments about the observation:

In the light of comments, are you likely to make any changes

Any further comments about the observation:

Teaching observation

Please complete this side before the session commences.

Name:	_____	Date:	_____
Observer:	_____	No. of students:	_____
Group:	_____	Start time:	_____
Topic:	_____	Finish time:	_____

Any particular factors / problems taken into account when planning the session:

Any changes made since similar previous sessions (if applicable)

Any aspects of this session which are new to you

How have you incorporated suggestions made previously (if applicable)

Against which criteria would you wish your session to be considered

Would you welcome any particular advice / help for this session or would you like anything to be specifically commented upon.

OBSERVER'S COMMENTS

The breakdown of each category (in italics) is a guide to the observer as to aspects for comment and discussion. They are not intended to be comprehensive or that each has to be covered every time. Different disciplines will have additional aspects to consider.

Teaching Characteristics	Comments
1. Preparation ***Selection of aims and objectives. Statement of aims and objectives.*** *Selection of content. Organisation of content. Planning involving resources and materials. Choice of teaching/ learning method.*	
2. Presentation *Beginning the lesson - introduction, continuity with other session and students' existing knowledge, objectives. Clarity of presentation. Pace of lesson. Awareness of individual needs. Attitude to subject matter. Attitude to students. Use of appropriate reinforcements.* ***Ending the session - summary, future work, etc.***	
3. Techniques and Aids *General apparatus - board, OHP, etc. Use of handouts. Instruction to students. Question and answer technique. Other evaluative procedures. Class management. Control of environment. Demonstration technique. Supervision of practice, etc.*	
4. Student Response *Level of participation. Attention and interest. Ability to carry out classwork. Attitude of students to classwork. Attitude of students to subject. Student - teaching rapport. General class atmosphere.*	
5. General *Was effective communication achieved? Were the objectives achieved? Were learning problems identified and overcome? Appropriateness of teaching / learning methods.*	
6. Techniques and Aids *General apparatus - board, OHP, etc. Use of handouts. Instruction to students. Question and answer technique. Other evaluative procedures. Class management. Control of environment. Demonstration technique. Supervision of practice, etc.*	

Course members notes about observation

Please complete after your post-session discussion with your observer.

How helpful were the comments about the observation?

In the light of comments are you likely to make any changes?

Any further comments about the session and observation.

12. Student observation

Although there are very valid gains from obtaining feedback from students about the delivery of a course there are also dangers when the data supplied by them is analysed. Although they may have access to information about the content of a course they may not necessarily appreciate what is necessary and what is not. They may also be unclear about our intentions and the long term benefits of the course. It may also depend on when they are asked to comment about a course or module, and they may therefore present a biased or sketchy picture. They may also be unprepared to give an honest opinion particularly if they are yet to complete a course or module.

Students may also find the course difficult and may comment unfavourably.

These two checklists are presented in the context of the student as the customer.

Although they would be reported possibly in the form of ratings we would question the use of student ratings as the only data to be used in observing teaching. They could be used in conjunction with other data, but we would suggest that they are better used by the lecturers themselves to evaluate their own teaching and not to be used by others as quality ratings for external purposes.

Checklist 22

Student Checklist

Please tick the numbers as follows:

1=strongly agree 2=agree 3=neither agree nor disagree
4=disagree 5=strongly disagree

The Lecturer.....

		5	4	3	2	1
1.	presented the subject so that I could understand it	....	....	....	....	....
2.	made the subject interesting	....	....	....	....	....
3.	presented material clearly and logically	....	....	....	....	....
4.	thoroughly prepared the lesson	....	....	....	....	....
5.	indicated how the lesson fitted into the module and related to other lessons	....	....	....	....	....
6.	indicated what we should read to expand on the lecture	....	....	....	....	....
7.	provided a framework for further study	....	....	....	....	....
8.	kept to the point without wasteful digressions	....	....	....	....	....
9.	wrote clearly on the blackboard	....	....	....	....	....
10.	organised work on the blackboard well	....	....	....	....	....
11.	used effective clear visuals aids	....	....	....	....	....
12.	used a variety of teaching techniques other than continuous speech	....	....	....	....	....
13.	tried to ensure that we all understood what was being taught	....	....	....	....	....
14.	made it clear what we had to learn	....	....	....	....	....
15.	spoke clearly and could be heard	....	....	....	....	....
16.	answered questions helpfully	....	....	....	....	....
17.	provided useful handouts	....	....	....	....	....
18.	started on time and finished on time	....	....	....	....	....
19.	indicated what we should prepare for the next lesson	....	....	....	....	....

(Adapted from in-house lecturer appraisal handout University of Teesside with thanks to B E Oldham)

Checklist 23

A student feedback form

This rating schedule was developed for use at Curtin University in Perth, Western Australia. The six items are dimensions obtained by statistical analysis from a large pool of items. The schedule was designed in conjunction with colleagues at University of Western Australia (UWA) and Curtin. The forms can be analysed statistically and the comments summarised. The data and its analysis are, at UWA and Curtin, the property of the lecturer. He or she may use (or not use) the evidence in submissions for promotions.

Your views on the course

Course.....

Lecturer.....

Please rate each of the six items on the scale provided and add a comment if you wish.
7 = Outstanding 6 = Very Good 5 = Good 4 = Average 3 = Poor 2 = Weak 1 = Abysmal

1. **Organisation** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   The lecturer gives direction as necessary ensuring the requirements of this unit are clear. *With this lecturer, I know what I'm supposed to be doing.*

2. **Feedback** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   The lecturer provides meaningful and adequate feedback. *This lecturer keeps me in the picture about how I'm doing.*

3. **Knowledge** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   The lecturer has command of the subject material. *This lecturer obviously knows what s/he's talking about.*

4. **Communication** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   The lecturer effectively communicates the instructional message. *This lecturer really gets the message across.*

5. **Responsiveness** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   The lecturer is sensitive and responsive to student needs at an individual and a group level. *This lecturer shows a genuine concern for students.*

6. **This lecturer compare to others.** 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

   In the light of the previous items, and taking into account the nature and relative difficulty of this course, how do you rate this lecturer compared with other lecturers you have had.

13. Annotated bibliography

George Brown
USDU/CVCP

Braskamp L A, Brandenburg, P G. Ory, J.C (1982) *Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness A Practical Guide* Beverley Hill: Saga
This guidebook provides information on what sources of data to use, how to collect and evaluate data and how to use it.

Brown, G and Atkins, M.. (1988) *Effective Teaching in Higher Education* London Methuen
This text reviews the research literature on Teaching and learning and it provides guidelines and suggestions on various approaches to teaching. It provides a useful background to the whole field.

Entwistle, N J and Tait, H (1990) Approaches to learning, evaluations of teaching and preferences for contrasting learning environments.
Higher Education, 19 169 - 194
Describes recent research that shows the relationships between students' approaches to study and the approaches to teaching in various departments.

Gibbs, G., Habeshawe T. & Habeshawe, S. (1988)
53 Interesting Ways of Appraising Your Teaching Bristol : T.E.S.
This book provides a wide variety of hints and suggestions on evaluating teaching.

March, H. W. (1987) Students' evaluation of university teaching: Research Findings, methodological issues and directions for future research.
International Journal of Educational Research 11, 4 (Whole issue)
A comprehensive scholarly review which discusses all aspects of evaluation of teaching - not just student evaluation.

Miller, A (1987) *Course Design for University Lecturers* London : Kogan Page
The text focuses primarily upon designing undergraduate courses. It provides ideas that may be used for evaluating courses.

O'Neill, M and Pennington, G. (1992) *Evaluating Teaching and Courses from an Active Learning Perspective* Sheffield: USDU/CVCP
A most useful text that contains examples of various approaches to evaluating teaching and contains a series of short articles by lecturers who have evaluated their teaching and some suggestions for workshops on evaluating teaching and courses.

Ramsden, P. (1991) A Performance Indicator of Teaching Quality in Higher Education *Studies in Higher Education, 16,2 129-150*
Describes a survey of Teaching in Australian Universities and demonstrates that it is possible to measure variations between subjects and within subjects by using a carefully constructed student questionnaire and discusses the possibilities of its use as a performance indicator.

University of Leeds (1992) *Evaluating Teaching and Learning: Collecting and using feedback from students and other sources: Guidelines for good practice.*
A succinct and useful guide to evaluating teaching. Available from the Staff and Departmental Development Unit of the University of Leeds.

Note:
The University of Ulster is just completing a research project on what counts as effective teaching in various subject areas. It has developed guidelines and schedules for evaluating different teaching methods and it has developed a series of training videos that give examples of teaching in different subject areas.
Contact Professor Eric Saunders, School of Education, University of Ulster, Jordanstown, Belfast. Phone 0232 365131

The USDU/CVCP have recently published a guide to using student feedback as a method of evaluation. Contact: Mrs Sylvia Hardwick, USDU, University of Sheffield. Phone 0742 768555 Ext 4211 Fax 0742 728705.

About SEDA (formerly SCED and SRHE (SD))

The Organisation:

SEDA, the Staff and Educational Development Association, is the principal organisation in Britain for the encouragement of innovation and good practice in teaching and learning in Higher Education. SEDA is essentially a co-operative network of colleagues working with the following broad aims:

- to lead and support effective improvements in the quality of students' educational experiences
- to provide a forum for discussion and for collaboration on creative ideas for learning development
- to assist the personal development of lecturers and educational developers
- to encourage greater understanding of the nature of student learning
- to offer support to new entrants to the profession
- to enable the exchange of information and dissemination of good practice

The organisation has grown from a loosely knit informal network of practitioners to its current status as a focus of activity in the field of educational development in Higher Education. This makes the administration more efficient and enables the exchange of information, dissemination of good practice and effective interaction of supportive colleagues, and recognises especially the need for universities and colleges to co-operate more closely.

Conferences/Workshops:

SEDA is highly regarded for its varied programme of events, designed to bring together practitioners of excellence in Higher Education for the interchange of ideas and ways of working. It holds at least two national conferences each year, together with regional conferences, workshops and special events.

Consultancies:

A major strength of the organisation is the number of highly experienced practitioners from universities and colleges who are able to initiate and run short courses, consultancies and workshops in a wide variety of fields such as initial training for new lecturers, gaming and simulations, group work, and all kinds of alternative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. There is a register of SEDA members who can be contacted for these purposes.

Local Networks:

As the organisation has grown, local groups of SEDA practitioners have been meeting to arrange regional events, and in some parts of the country these have developed into organised local networks: there already exist effective local networks in the South-east, the North-east, the M1/M69 East Midlands group and in Scotland. Other groups are currently being set up in the West Midlands and Central England, and in the North-west and North Wales.

Membership:

There are three categories of membership: Associate, Individual and Corporate.

Information:

For further information about membership, or any other aspect of SEDA, contact SEDA's Administrator: Jill Brookes, Gala House, 3 Raglan Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7RA Tel: 021 446 6166 Fax: 021 446 5991